



DISASTER GRANTMAKING:

A Practical Guide for Foundations and Corporations

2007 Edition



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The Report of a Joint Working Group of the European Foundation Centre and the Council on Foundations

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Contents

Executive Summary	1
Introduction	3
Context	5
Principles	9
Tips for Good Disaster Grantmaking Practices	11
Facts and Figures	21
Selected Resources	33
Working Group Members, Sponsors, and Staff	39

Executive Summary

Moved by widely publicized human suffering and increased disaster aid requests, foundations and corporations are becoming more active in the disaster relief field. Grantmakers have a distinct role to play in disasters because of their ongoing relations with grantees, long-term perspective, flexibility and convening capacity. Lacking the sizable emergency relief resources of governments and some well-known nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), foundations and corporate grantmakers nevertheless can make a significant contribution, for instance, by filling critical gaps in underfunded areas like disaster rehabilitation, prevention, research and education.

Based on lessons learned from a year-long, joint study of the European Foundation Centre and the Council on Foundations, we concluded that grantmakers can be more effective and strategic in addressing disasters by following eight principles of good disaster management:

1. Do no harm.
2. Stop, look and listen before taking action.
3. Don't act in isolation.
4. Think beyond the immediate crisis to the long term.
5. Bear in mind the expertise of local organizations.
6. Find out how prospective grantees operate.
7. Be accountable to those you are trying to help.
8. Communicate your work widely and use it as an educational tool.

A number of practical suggestions for good disaster grantmaking flow from these principles and are highlighted in this guide.

Introduction

This report is intended to guide and inform foundations and corporate grantmakers interested in becoming more effective and strategic in their disaster grantmaking. Included are some broad principles, lessons from experience, examples of good and bad practices, facts and figures, and a list of useful websites.

While discussions leading to this guide began two years before the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on New York City and Washington, DC, those events serve to underscore the initiative's timeliness and relevance. They also serve as a tragic reminder that disasters take many forms and touch people in many different ways. For the purposes of this report, the concept of a disaster encompasses natural events such as earthquakes, cyclones, volcanic eruptions, fires and floods, but also more complex emergencies that result in widespread human suffering like famine, civil conflict and acts of terrorism.

A joint working group, comprising members of the Council on Foundations and the European Foundation Centre compiled this information at the request of their respective memberships. The report reflects a series of meetings, surveys and discussions with disaster experts from around the world. The recommendations were substantially shaped at a three-day EFC–Council workshop for grantmakers, aid agencies, businesses, governments and multilateral organizations held in Kingston, Jamaica, June 17–19, 2001. The second edition features updated facts and examples of recent disasters.

Context

Instant global media coverage and the dramatic expansion of foundation and corporate grantmaking worldwide converged to increase media coverage of disasters and to focus the attention of grantmakers on how to respond in the most effective and responsible manner.

A Comprehensive Approach to Disasters

Over the past fifty years, there has been a significant evolution in thinking about disasters among aid workers, economic development specialists, policymakers, community planners, academics and others involved in the disaster field. The debate has shifted from the narrow concept of providing quick disaster “relief” based on a charitable impulse to a broader concept of disaster “management” that encompasses community involvement in prevention and preparedness, mitigation, emergency relief, rehabilitation as well as long-term development that incorporates both prevention and preparedness. Instead of viewing disasters as single tragic events, they are seen by professionals in the field as part of a larger process or cycle, which requires a long-term perspective that addresses root causes as well as immediate needs. Integrating disaster prevention with long-term development is seen as the most effective way of saving lives and protecting livelihoods.

Reducing Vulnerability to Disasters

Some experts believe that disasters are neither natural nor inevitable but are the result of social, political and economic (*i.e.*, man-made) factors that cause certain populations—usually impoverished and politically marginalized minorities, especially the elderly,

women and children—to live in circumstances that render them especially vulnerable to the impact of hazards like floods, earthquakes, typhoons, drought or conflict. Programs that aim to reduce people’s vulnerability to these hazards lie at the heart of good disaster management.

Key Role of Local Organizations

Disaster management is based on the concept of active community participation in all phases of the disaster cycle. Rather than seeing disaster-affected individuals as victims or passive recipients of outside assistance, good disaster management recognizes local people and their community-based organizations—village committees, agricultural cooperatives, tribal councils, women’s associations, youth groups, etc.—as valuable assets. When a disaster strikes, local people, working through their community structures and organizations, are the first to respond. They save lives. They know which members of the community are hardest hit, and they know what assistance is appropriate. What these local organizations may lack, however, are financial resources, organizational capacity, advanced equipment, and training in disaster prevention, preparation and planning.

Unique Role of Grantmakers

Disasters involve a variety of actors; governments at all levels, multilateral institutions such as the United Nations and World Bank, and private aid organizations can all play key roles. Collectively they provide the bulk of assistance and on-the-ground programs. Foundations and corporate grantmakers have a distinct and crucial role to play in disaster management. Their resources may appear comparatively modest, yet given some of their strengths listed below, the results can be effective:

- A mission to **serve the public good** in diverse ways
- Ongoing **relationships with local organizations**
- A **long-term perspective**, often five to ten years or more
- An ability to convene key actors across sectors and to serve as a catalyst for **cross-sector collaboration**
- A capacity to call attention to **political, economic and social policies** that exacerbate the vulnerability of populations to hazards
- **Experience supporting research** and disseminating results to interested parties
- **Programmatic flexibility** that permits them to respond creatively and strategically to disaster situations

- Administrative flexibility that permits **timely action**

At the same time, grantmakers face serious challenges when deluged with emergency grant requests in times of disasters. Decisions about disaster funding often fall outside a grantmaker's regular program areas, with typically limited or absent in-house expertise on the complexities of disaster issues. Moreover, disaster grant decisions can be subject to emotional appeals and are often made quickly under perceived time pressures.

This report attempts to assist foundations and corporate grantmakers to meet these challenges, to understand the disaster process better, and to make the most of their comparative advantages in disaster grantmaking.

Principles of Good Disaster Grantmaking

1. Do no harm.

Not all disaster assistance is beneficial. Inappropriate items can overwhelm limited transportation, storage and distribution capacities, thereby delaying the delivery of aid that is desperately needed. Aim to ensure that your grant contributes to the solution and not the problem.

2. Stop, look and listen before taking action.

Information is the key to good disaster grantmaking. Every disaster has unique characteristics. Take the time to learn about the specifics of a disaster before deciding how to respond.

3. Don't act in isolation.

Coordination among disaster grantmakers, among NGOs operating on the ground, and between these two groups, can reduce duplication of effort, make efficient use of resources, and ensure that the highest priority needs are addressed first.

Grantmakers can participate in various standing and ad hoc forums—both in person and through electronic means—where needs are discussed, information exchanged and assistance coordinated.

4. Think beyond the immediate crisis to the long term.

The emergency phase of a disaster attracts most of the attention and resources. Grantmakers can play a useful role before the crisis by supporting disaster prevention and preparedness activities, and afterward, by filling gaps between emergency relief and long-term development programs.

5. Bear in mind the expertise of local organizations.

Community-based organizations and NGOs with a local presence are the first on the scene when disasters occur. They know best what assistance is needed and they understand the complex political, social and cultural context of a disaster. However, these organizations are often hampered by lack of resources and organizational capacity. Working with and supporting these organizations allows them to carry out their important role while providing grantmakers with valuable information about the situation on the ground.

6. Find out how prospective grantees operate.

Organizations that work on disasters vary greatly in their approach and overall philosophy. Some specialize only in emergency relief, while others have a long-term development orientation. Some support the work of local organizations, while others do not. It is wise to know what approach you are supporting before making a grant.

7. Be accountable to those you are trying to help.

Grantmakers are accountable, not only to their donors, boards and shareholders but also to the people they seek to assist. Grantmakers need to go beyond merely determining how their grant was spent to engage their grantees in a process that assesses social impact.

8. Communicate your work widely and use it as an educational tool.

Highlighting examples of good disaster grantmaking is an excellent way for grantmakers to educate both internal and external audiences about the disaster process. It is useful to build a knowledge base, record lessons learned, and share your experience with boards, staff, employees, other grantmakers, the media, community groups, public officials and international organizations.

Tips for Good Disaster Grantmaking Practices

1. Developing an internal plan for handling disaster requests.

- If you have local employees in the disaster area, **develop a disaster plan** for communicating with them (as well as their families) and for meeting their needs, as this may be your first priority.

Example: Following the September 11 terrorist attacks, American Express customer service representatives called all New York-based employees to verify their contact numbers, check on their safety and identify any problems. Employee assistance hotline numbers were launched, along with a section on the company website, to provide necessary information.

- **Establish internal guidelines and criteria** for when and where your organization will make disaster grants, but make them flexible enough to respond to unanticipated situations. Some grantmakers only respond to disasters where they have programs and partners on the ground. Others respond only in certain countries or regions.

Example: When making disaster grants, Philip Morris uses flexible guidelines developed by an internal humanitarian aid task force composed of representatives from corporate affairs and each of its operating companies. Through the task force, Philip Morris coordinates a range of responses, which included—in the case of the El Salvador earthquake—cash for emergency relief and donation of food as well as grants for tents and reconstruction of 100 permanent homes.

- Decide if you want to **link disaster grants to your organization’s mission**, expertise or program focus.

Example: Following the January 2001 Gujarat earthquake in India, local Ericsson offices started working to restore the communications networks in the affected areas. A project manager from Ericsson India was appointed to coordinate the actions, which included supplying the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies with mobile telephones and additional requested supplies.

- **Set up streamlined internal decisionmaking procedures** for disaster grants.

Example: Some grantmakers require only a brief written proposal in emergency situations, or they may permit the grantee to write a formal proposal after the grant has been made on the basis of a verbal agreement. Other grantmakers allow partners in disaster-affected areas to redirect previously approved development grants for emergency purposes.

- **Identify potential grantee partners in advance.**

2. Learning about the disaster situation before responding.

- **Don’t make assumptions** about what is needed in a particular disaster situation; every disaster is different.
- Good sources of information about local conditions and needs include locally based foundation or corporate staff, local grantees or partner organizations, and community philanthropy organizations serving the area.
- Seek information about a disaster, including an assessment of needs, from an experienced international aid organization or a reputable local organization. A list of useful organizations and websites is provided in the resources section of this guide.
- Media reports can provide spot information, but caution should be exercised; news accounts should not be taken as substitutes for a **professional assessment of disaster needs**.

Example: Initial media reports that clothing was desperately needed after floods along the U.S.–Mexico border in 2001 led to the shipment of more than 12 tractor-trailer loads of clothing. It was realized soon after the initial report that in fact the clothing was not needed, yet it arrived anyway and ended up sitting around for months.

- Unfortunately, government information about disasters can sometimes be skewed for political purposes in order to channel aid toward certain favored populations while ignoring or downplaying the needs of others.

Example: For more than a year after parts of northern Ethiopia experienced severe famine in the early 1980s, the government of that country denied the problem because the affected regions were in rebellion against the central authorities.

3. Thinking about when to make a disaster grant.

- Don't wait for a disaster to occur. **Consider supporting disaster prevention**, early warning systems, preparedness and planning activities in a disaster-prone region *before* a disaster happens.
- Don't feel pressured to make a quick grant when a disaster takes place. It's unlikely that your funds will make a difference in the first 48 hours when most casualties occur. **Take time to find out about the situation**—what types of assistance are most needed and appropriate, and which organizations are active on the ground.

Example: The Foundation for the Support of Women's Work found that during the 1999 earthquake in western Turkey, 9,600 victims were rescued by local people and communities, which were able to respond immediately, while later only 400 people were rescued by professional rescue teams.

- Keep in mind that big international relief organizations sometimes receive more contributions for a specific disaster than they can spend on the immediate emergency, and so more relief funding may not be needed.
- Grantmakers can play a useful role by waiting a few weeks or months to see what important recovery needs remain after the relief agencies have moved on. **Consider splitting your grant**, so that part is given for immediate relief and part is held back to fill critical gaps in the recovery process a few weeks or months after the emergency has passed.

Example: The Ford Foundation responded to the February 2000 floods in Mozambique with a grant of U.S. \$930,000 from its reserve funds to the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology of Mozambique. About ten percent was targeted for the emergency with the remainder going for long-term development to reduce vulnerability to floods in the future.

- Consider linking disaster response needs with long-term development.

Example: The Kresge Foundation responded to Hurricane Mitch, which hit Nicaragua and Honduras in late 1998, with a grant to rebuild and improve permanent community water systems.

4. Deciding whether to provide cash assistance, or goods and services.

- **Cash assistance is nearly always preferable** to donated goods, because it allows for maximum flexibility to meet the highest priority needs and can be used to purchase required items in the disaster-affected area, thereby boosting the local economy while minimizing transport costs.
- Donated goods, such as pharmaceuticals, can be helpful, provided they **respond to specific requests**; are coordinated with local organizations for transportation, storage and distribution; and are clearly labeled in the appropriate local language(s).

Example: After mudslides hit El Salvador in 1998, GlaxoSmithKline worked with its partners AmeriCares, the Order of Malta and the Minister of Health in El Salvador to identify and deliver the specific antibiotics that were needed.

Example: Boxes of medicine airlifted following Hurricane George in the Dominican Republic in 1998 were left sitting in a warehouse because they were not labeled as to what they were and how they should be used. Medicines labeled in English could not be used by local people who spoke only Spanish.

- Spontaneous individual donations of food, clothing and household items arrive far too late, are often inappropriate, and can clog limited local transport, storage and distribution capacities. In general, these should be discouraged.

Example: Boxes of winter coats sent to victims of 1998's Hurricane Gilbert in the Caribbean region were useless, and their transport and storage slowed the relief effort.

- Donated services (e.g., health professionals, rescue teams, engineers, logistics, transport, and technical experts, etc.) can be helpful provided they **do not duplicate services** available locally and are closely coordinated with disaster response organizations on the ground.

Example: During the 1999 Kosovo emergency, Microsoft helped set up a special computer database that assisted with family reunification.

5. Looking at the disaster management picture.

- Think about **making disaster grants aimed at disaster prevention or preparedness** so that communities regularly hit by floods, earthquakes and other disasters can develop disaster plans, raise public awareness about disaster preparedness, and train local disaster response teams for the next emergency.
- **Fill important gaps between relief and long-term development**, such as rebuilding damaged schools and health clinics or restarting agricultural production with seeds and tools.

Example: Following the January 2001 Gujarat earthquake, Charities Aid Foundation India developed a 12-month plan to help establish a Kutch Community Foundation to carry out development projects for the region. Plans call for seven schools to be reconstructed and five schools to be repaired, a health center to be built and the livelihoods of 605 families to be restored, along with various other initiatives.

- Don't overlook grants to organizations working on conflict resolution or supporting the care of refugees displaced by war.

Example: During the 1999 crisis in Kosovo, AT&T matched contributions from its employees to the International Rescue Committee to assist with refugee populations worldwide. As a result, employees donated more money to the International Rescue Committee during a three-month period than they had to any other disaster prior to the crisis in Kosovo.

- Grants that **strengthen local organizational capacity** to respond to future disasters are a good investment in saving lives and livelihoods. Consider making grants for general operating support.

Example: In keeping with its objectives to strengthen civil society and the nonprofit sector, the Charles Stewart Mott foundation has given grants for humanitarian efforts at local, national and international levels, including a 1999 grant to the International Rescue Committee to build the capacity and sustainability of the nonprofit sector in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

- Consider **making grants for research on the root causes** of specific disasters, how people have traditionally coped, and what modern technology can contribute to mitigating future problems. Be sure to include funds to disseminate the results.

Example: The Aga Khan Foundation, through its Planning and Building Service in Pakistan, has supported developing appropriate technology related to earthquake-

resistant buildings, solar energy use, thermal efficiency and village planning. Studies are underway on hazard mapping and on renovating structurally unsafe housing in mountainous areas through community-based actions.

6. Choosing a grantee.

- Explore the **various options for channeling support**, including multilateral organizations, government agencies, international, national and local NGOs. Keep in mind that appropriate NGOs may include religious institutions, labor unions, research organizations and the media, among many others.

Example: In response to the ongoing drought and famine in Ethiopia, Johnson & Johnson Europe worked with government representatives in the region and AmeriCares to identify appropriate medical supplies for the population.

- Some grantmakers find it useful to **develop a long-term relationship** with a reputable international relief organization, depositing “rapid response” funds with the organization on an annual or multiyear basis that can be drawn down quickly as disasters occur around the world. Some of these organizations support local efforts while others implement their own independent programs. Grantmakers should investigate how their funds will be used, whether or not the grantee works in ways that support and build local capacity, and whether or not they coordinate their activities with others.

Example: Bristol-Myers Squibb provides ongoing support to four international relief organizations that have local staff in disaster-affected countries and are able to provide assessments for appropriate product donations. In addition, they provide a multiyear grant to the American Red Cross that can be drawn upon as necessary.

- Consider looking beyond the obvious choices to **smaller indigenous organizations**, for example nondiscriminatory, religion-based groups. Bear in mind that organizations—whether locally based or international—which have an ongoing presence in a community, a local staff, and a commitment to participatory development, are better positioned to respond to all phases of the disaster cycle than external organizations that enter a community only during the emergency and then withdraw.

Example: After Hurricane Mitch hit Central America in October 1998, The Global Fund for Women set up an Emergency Grant Fund and invited 34 previous grantees in Honduras and Nicaragua to submit brief proposals for funding.

- Be aware that **legal restrictions may affect direct grants** to organizations in other countries. In some cases, organizations may not be permitted to receive funds from abroad. It is best to check with potential first-time grantees before sending any funds. In addition, some governments impose complete or partial embargoes on its citizens providing aid to certain countries for political or military reasons.
- Check to see if prospective grantees subscribe to one of the **international codes of conduct** or **standards for disaster response**. We are currently aware of codes developed by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, InterAction and the SPHERE Project.
- Look for disaster grantees that **support long-term community and economic development programs**; talk to them about how you can support efforts to integrate disaster prevention and preparedness into their long-term community development activities.
- Where ongoing relationships with local partners already exist, think about ways of working with them that strengthen their capacity to prevent or mitigate disasters. For example, disaster awareness and preparedness can be taught as part of an educational program in the schools. Health programs can incorporate a local disaster planning and training component.

7. Coordinating your disaster grants with others.

- **Explore partnerships and cooperation with other grantmakers.** Find out which grantmakers are responding to a disaster and what they are funding by participating in existing disaster information-sharing networks and online bulletin boards, such as those listed in the resources section.
- **Associations of grantmakers can play a useful role** by collecting and posting information about how their members respond to a specific disaster.
- After finding out the priority needs, see what areas are being funded by other donors, so that you can **identify gaps that need filling**.

Example: Citigroup established a relief fund to provide higher education scholarships for the children of those who died during the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States.

- **Communicate what you are doing** with other grantmakers and with operational organizations responding to disasters on the ground.
- Consider making a grant to **support a temporary or ongoing coordinating body** for operational agencies working on the ground in response to a specific emergency. This type of coordination is extremely valuable, even though funds are often not available for it.

Example: After a series of floods, earthquakes and forest fires in 1989–90 in a county north of San Francisco, the Marin Community Foundation convened all the key disaster planning and response organizations from both the government and nonprofit sectors to ensure coordination of services.

8. Monitoring and evaluating disaster grants.

- Monitoring disaster grants is no less important than monitoring other types of grants, since even purely relief grants can have positive or negative consequences (or both). The chaos that often surrounds disaster situations can foster an environment in which misuse of aid may occur. Grantmakers should follow up with their disaster grantees, whether intermediary or local organizations, to **ensure that funds or donated products are used as intended**.

Example: The monitoring of a Bernard van Leer Foundation grant to register and reunite children separated from their families, during the floods in southern Mozambique in February 2000, enabled the grantmaker to ensure accountability and use the data collected for the longer-term development of the communities.

- Proper grant monitoring is an essential tool to **ensure grantmaker accountability**. Foundations and corporate grantmakers are accountable to their boards, their donors, their shareholders (for corporates), and their employees as well as to people they serve through their grants.
- **On-site monitoring of disaster grants** is best, although this may be impractical for the majority of foundations.
- **Make your reporting requirements clear** to grantees. Written monitoring reports can suffice so long as grantmakers insist on a specific description of how the grant was used backed up by a clear financial report and supporting documentation.

- Require that grantees provide more than just a financial report that shows how the funds were spent. Press them to **assess the social impact of the grant**—*i.e.*, how it affected the community, whether or not it strengthened local capacity, which groups benefited and which did not.
- Formal evaluations are not normally undertaken for small disaster grants. However, **evaluations may be useful for larger grants**, if carried out as a learning exercise with the grantee and as part of a longer-term development program. Such an evaluation can improve the effectiveness of future disaster grants.

9. Enhancing understanding of disasters.

- Make it a point to **educate your boards, employees, donors and shareholders** (in the case of corporate grantmakers) about the disaster cycle and how your foundation or corporate grantmaking program is applying a comprehensive disaster management approach to your disaster grantmaking.
- **Convene or support meetings of funders and grantees** to exchange experience and ideas with respect to disaster management issues.
- **Work with the media** to raise public awareness about disasters by encouraging disaster coverage that goes beyond dramatic events and personal stories to include an examination of root causes of disasters; the political, economic and social factors that contribute to them; and the important role of disaster prevention. Consider making a grant to send a member of the media on a site visit to a disaster area to publicize why the affected population was so vulnerable and what steps could be taken to reduce their vulnerability in the future.
- Don't be shy about communicating your disaster grantmaking activities and experience with both internal and external audiences.
- **Make use of the Internet and other mass communication tools** to communicate your disaster grantmaking and the lessons you have learned from it.
Example: After severe flooding on the Red River in North Dakota and Minnesota in 1997, the Fargo-Moorhead Area Foundation set up a website so that grantseekers could post their needs and grantmakers could choose what they wanted to fund.

- Consider making grants for disaster prevention education and programs to raise awareness in disaster-prone areas or study trips for public officials and opinion leaders.

Example: *The Bangladesh Freedom Foundation provides funding for disaster preparedness training and hazard mitigation strategies in the disaster-prone coastal areas of Bangladesh. The main objective of the project is to harness and share local expertise, knowledge and wisdom. A further aim is to advocate incorporating disaster preparedness training into school curricula.*

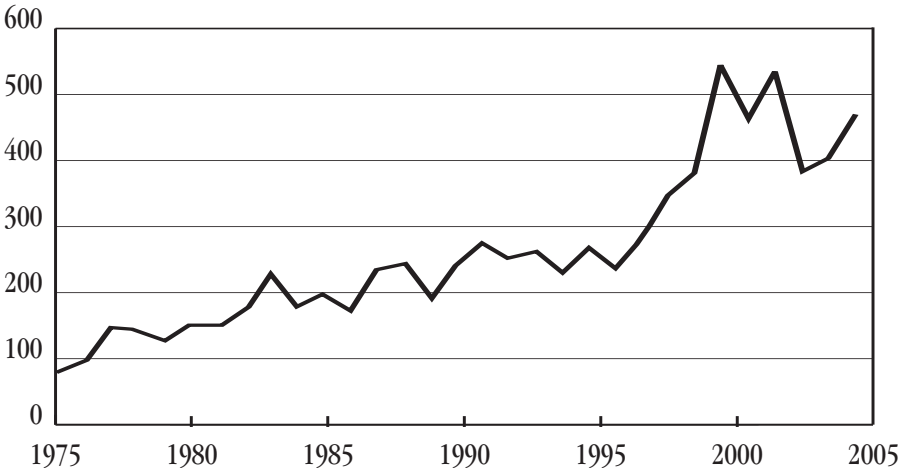
Facts and Figures

Disasters

“In the last two decades, more than one and a half million people have been killed in natural disasters. The total number of people affected each year has doubled over the last decade. Human deaths are the most reliable measure of human loss... However, as with economic data, this reveals only the tip of the iceberg in terms of development losses and human suffering.”

—*Reducing Disaster Risk: A Challenge for Development*, United Nations Development Programme, 2004, p.13

Time Trends of Disasters in 1975–2005



Credits: International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN/ISDR)

*Natural disasters—Country-level disasters

Source of data: EM-DAT: The OFDA/CRED International Disaster Database, Université Catholique de Louvain, Belgium (www.em-dat.net)

Disasters—By World Region

This section provides a snapshot of some major disasters in five regions of the world. All of these disasters occurred from 2003–2006 with one exception: the ongoing civil war in Columbia, which dates back to the 1960s. Although this is not a comprehensive list, it offers examples of disasters—both natural and otherwise—and the resulting human and economic impact.

ASIA

Disaster	Location	Date	
Earthquake and subsequent Tsunamis ¹	Indian Ocean Magnitude 9.3 earthquake and tsunamis affected 13 countries in the region.	December 2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 230,000 people killed or missing ■ 2.1 million displaced² ■ \$10.4 billion rebuilding cost³
Earthquake ⁴	Pakistan and India Magnitude 7.6 earthquake occurred on the Pakistan-India border.	October 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 74,647 people killed ■ 134,931 people injured ■ 5.15 million left homeless⁵ ■ \$5.2 billion total estimated cost⁶
Typhoons and Flooding ⁷	South China The 2006 Pacific season had more than 20 typhoons and supertyphoons.	June–July 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 1,600 people killed and 400 missing ■ Eight typhoons alone damaged or destroyed 4.7 million homes and 79 million acres of cropland⁸ ■ \$2.4 billion in direct economic loss because of typhoons Saomai and Prapiroon^{9,10}

MIDDLE EAST

Disaster	Location	Date	Damage
Earthquake ¹¹	Bam, Iran Magnitude 6.6 quake destroyed this 2,500-year-old city.	December 2003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 31,884 people killed ■ 18,000 people injured¹² ■ Damage to or destruction of 85 percent of the infrastructure¹³ ■ \$1 billion rebuilding cost¹⁴
Conflict ¹⁵	Lebanon Military conflict in Lebanon and northern Israel broke out between Hezbollah paramilitary forces and the Israeli army.	July–August 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 1,357 people killed¹⁶ ■ 30,000 homes destroyed ■ 25 percent of Lebanon's population temporarily displaced ■ \$3.6 billion of physical damage¹⁷
Civil Strife ¹⁸	Iraq U.S.-led invasion of Iraq began on March 19, 2003.	2003–present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Number of civilians killed by military intervention estimated from 60,187¹⁹ to 655,000²⁰ ■ 3,005 U.S.-led coalition forces killed ■ 3 million Iraqis displaced²¹

EUROPE

Disaster	Location	Date	Damage
Heat Wave ²²	Europe Summer 2003 was one of the hottest on record in Europe.	August 2003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 35,000²³ to 52,452²⁴ deaths ■ Central Europe's 2003-2004 wheat production decreased by 27 percent since the last season's near-average crop²⁵ ■ \$13 billion in economic losses²⁶

AFRICA

Disaster	Location	Date	Damage
Civil Strife ²⁷	Darfur, Sudan and Eastern Chad An armed conflict began between the government-backed Janjaweed—a militia group—and the local population in the Darfur region.	2003–present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 180,000 to 400,000 people killed between September 2003 and January 2005 ²⁸ ■ Two million people internally displaced and 200,000 refugees in neighboring eastern Chad
Food Crisis	Sahel region, West Africa A 2004 locust swarm destroyed farmland in Niger, Mali, Mauritania, and Burkina Faso.	2004–2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Eight million people affected by the food shortage ²⁹ ■ 36.4 million people malnourished ³⁰
Drought	Horn of Africa Food shortages affected people in Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Somalia, and Djibouti.	October 2005– March 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 17.5 million people facing a food scarcity in the greater Horn of Africa—7.5 million in immediate need ³¹ ■ 70 percent of the cattle and sheep in the region dead since December 2005

NORTH AND SOUTH AMERICA

Disaster	Location	Date	Damage
Hurricane Katrina	United States A powerful Category 3 hurricane devastated New Orleans and the Gulf Coast.	August 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 1,300 people killed ■ 2.16 million people evacuated ³² ■ 90,000 square-mile area devastated ³³ ■ \$75 to \$200 billion estimated economic costs ^{34,35}
Hurricane Stan	Guatemala A relatively weak storm caused severe flash floods and mud slides.	October 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 1,513 people killed ■ 475,314 people affected ■ \$988 million or almost 3.6 percent of the country's 2004 GDP in economic losses
Conflict/Displacement	Colombia A continuing civil war is complicated by drug trade and poverty.	1960s–present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 35,000 people killed since 1990 ■ Three million people displaced ³⁶

- 1 Refer to Wikipedia for a detailed summary of the Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunamis: en.wikipedia.org.
- 2 U.N. Office of the Special Envoy for Tsunami Recovery, "Indian Ocean Tsunami," London, UK: Reuters Foundation, www.alertnet.org (Last reviewed March 26, 2007).
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- 5 United States Agency for International Development, *South Asia Earthquake Fact Sheet #44 (FY2006)*, ReliefWeb, August 25, 2006, www.reliefweb.int.
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- 14 Murphy, Clare, "Starting from Scratch in Bam," *BBC News Online*, January 2, 2004, news.bbc.co.uk.
- 15 Refer to Wikipedia for a detailed summary of the 2006 Lebanon-Israeli conflict: en.wikipedia.org.
- 16 AlertNet, "Who Works Where: Lebanon Latest," London, UK: Reuters Foundation, August 24, 2006. www.alertnet.org.
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DISASTERS AND VULNERABILITY

INDIAN OCEAN EARTHQUAKE AND TSUNAMI (DECEMBER 2004)

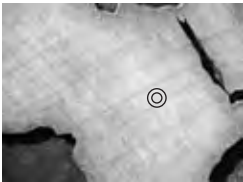


On the morning of December 26, 2004, an undersea earthquake measuring a record 9.3 magnitude hit the Indonesian island of Sumatra. The earthquake triggered a series of huge and destructive waves—called tsunamis—that spread throughout the Indian Ocean and affected coastal communities in 13 countries. With waves as high as 100 feet in some areas, the tsunami caused significant damage and resulted in the loss of life in India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Maldives, Myanmar, Somalia, Sri Lanka, and Thailand. Approximately 230,000 people were killed or reported missing—one-third were children—and the livelihood of as many as five million people was jeopardized by the Indian Ocean tsunami.¹

Vulnerability

Even though the earthquake’s epicenter struck near Sumatra at approximately 8 a.m. local time, the impact of the tsunami was felt several hours later thousands of miles away in India, Sri Lanka, the Maldives, and Somalia. Despite this time lag, most victims were caught off guard because there were no tsunami warning systems in the Indian Ocean. As the *World Disasters Report 2005* notes, a simple phone call saved thousands of lives when the giant tsunami waves hit India.² The cost of aid and reconstruction to the region following the tsunami is estimated at \$7.5 billion. An Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning System, which cost \$200 million, was finally put in place in June 2006.³

CIVIL WAR, DARFUR REGION OF WESTERN SUDAN AND EASTERN CHAD (2003–PRESENT)



Roughly two million people have been displaced from the Darfur region in western Sudan since the government launched a counter-insurgency campaign in 2003 against rebel groups in the area. In addition, about 400,000 people have been killed and more than 3.5 million men, women, and children are now completely dependent on international aid for survival. Continuing clashes in Darfur now hinder the flow of humanitarian aid to refugee camps and prevent refugees from returning to their homes.

Vulnerability

Referring to an international peace strategy for Darfur that included a relatively small African Union peacekeeping force as “too little too late,” Jan Pronk, the U.N. special envoy for Sudan, recommended a larger peacekeeping force that was backed by sanctions against those who carried out killings and rapes in Darfur.⁴ In addition, a report from the U.K.-based Minority Rights International notes that a U.N.-sponsored integrated early warning system to monitor escalating human rights abuses could have helped avert the conflict in Darfur. The report recommends U.N. member states to develop a rapid-response team with expertise in conflict resolution and minority rights that can be deployed at an early stage to help in catastrophes like Darfur.⁵

FOOD CRISIS, SAHEL REGION OF WEST AFRICA (2004–2005)



Food shortages during the “lean season” (the period before the next season’s harvest) are commonplace in the Sahel region of West Africa, which covers Niger, Mali, Mauritania, and Burkina Faso. However, during the 2004–2005 season, the food shortage became a crisis after locust swarms from the mountains of North Africa invaded the region. Prices of food grains increased

up to ten times in some areas because of a poor harvest and increased protectionism from neighboring countries. Access to food became extremely limited, which led to mass starvation.

Vulnerability

According to the international NGO Oxfam, starvation and acute malnutrition in the Sahel stems from several causes: chronic poverty, years of drought, few employment opportunities when people are not farming, lack of access to basic social services, poor government policies, and more recently, regional trade barriers.⁶ However, small interventions could have averted the 2004–2005 food crisis. According to the *World Disasters Report 2005*, when news of the swarms first emerged, \$1 million could have contained the locust invasion in July 2003. However, donors’ delayed response meant that 100 times that figure was ultimately needed to address the crisis.⁷

CIVIL WAR, COLOMBIA (1960–PRESENT)



Colombia's decades-long civil war was recently named the worst humanitarian crisis in the western hemisphere by the UN humanitarian affairs chief. The conflict is a complicated struggle between the Colombian government, left-wing insurgent groups, and right-wing paramilitaries. The massive cocaine trade and Colombia's long history of unequal wealth and land distribution have also helped fuel the conflict for almost five decades. Colombia now has the highest landmine casualty rate in the world and the second highest number of displaced people (after Sudan). More than half of all displaced persons in Colombia are children under the age of 18.⁸ In addition, Colombia is home to some of the world's oldest and smallest indigenous groups who are at a high risk of displacement and extinction because of the ongoing civil war.⁹

VULNERABILITY

Human rights observers note that women, children, and minority and indigenous communities disproportionately suffer in conflict situations. The current Colombian government is focusing on tighter security and weapons disarmament as strategies for achieving peace in the country. However, experts believe that the government should also create a comprehensive plan to reduce the country's high poverty rate. Doing so will address one of the root causes of the conflict by creating more options for millions of underprivileged Colombians. AlertNet, a news service that was established by the Reuters Foundation and covers humanitarian emergencies, states, "One of the reasons peace is so elusive is that life with the army or guerrillas or paramilitaries is a tempting career option for many poor people with scant options for making a living."¹⁰

HURRICANE KATRINA, GULF COAST REGION OF THE UNITED STATES (AUGUST 2005)



The United States National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) states that the 2005 Atlantic hurricane season shattered previous records with the highest number of named storms, hurricanes, and Category 5 storms. Hurricane Katrina, a Category 3 storm, caused more than \$100 billion in damage across vast swathes of the Gulf Coast—an area roughly the size of Great Britain. The hurricane affected areas in

Louisiana, Mississippi, Florida, Georgia, and Alabama. Approximately 2.16 million people were evacuated from their homes, and 19 months later many have not returned.

Vulnerability

Despite New Orleans' vulnerability to hurricanes, its levees had not been maintained nor strengthened in years. When New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin issued a city-wide evacuation order one day before the storm hit the city, 27 percent of its households were stranded because these individuals did not have the means or access to transportation. The lack of a clear central authority, adequate coordination mechanisms among different levels of government, and damage to the local government headquarters further undermined effective relief and rescue operations. Dave Paul Zervaas, regional coordinator for Latin America and the Caribbean at the United Nation's International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR), uses Hurricane Katrina as an example of the need to make people less vulnerable to disasters.¹¹

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Selected Resources

Nongovernmental Organizations

- **AIDMATRIX** (www.aidmatrix.org)

This site uses technology and partnerships to bring items such as food, clothing, building supplies, and medical and educational supplies to people in need.

- **Alertnet** (www.alertnet.org)

This free news and communications service was established by the Reuters Foundation to provide concise, reliable information to organizations responding to humanitarian emergencies with the aim of helping them coordinate their efforts and get aid to those affected by disasters faster.

- **AmeriCares** (www.americares.org)

This nonprofit disaster relief and humanitarian aid organization provides immediate response to emergency medical needs and supports long-term healthcare programs. AmeriCares solicits donations of medicines, medical supplies, and other relief materials from U.S. and international manufacturers and delivers them to indigenous healthcare and welfare professionals in 137 countries around the world.

- **American Red Cross** (www.redcross.org)

The Red Cross helps people prevent, prepare for, and respond to emergencies in the United States through its humanitarian services and programs. The Red Cross also gives health and safety training to the public and is the largest supplier of blood and blood products in the United States.

- ***Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre*** (www.adpc.ait.net)
 This regional resource center works toward disaster reduction for safer communities and sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific.
- ***CARE*** (www.care.org)
 CARE is one of the world's largest international relief and development organizations.
- ***Caribbean Disaster Mitigation Project*** (www.oas.org/CDMP)
 This project is aimed at establishing sustainable public/private disaster mitigation mechanisms that measurably lessen loss of life, reduce potential damage, and shorten the disaster recovery period.
- ***Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Response Association***
 (www.disasters.org)
 This association assists communities worldwide in disaster preparedness, response, and recovery and serves as a professional association linking professionals, volunteers, and organizations active in all phases of emergency preparedness and management.
- ***Disaster Resource Network (DRN)*** (www.weforum.org)
 Established by the World Economic Forum, DRN is now a private foundation that coordinates the donations of goods and pro bono services contributed by members of the World Economic Forum.
- ***Fritz Institute*** (www.fritzinstitute.org)
 This nonprofit organization employs private sector expertise to address complex challenges in delivering humanitarian relief to vulnerable people.
- ***Global Disaster Alert and Coordination System*** (www.gdacs.org)
 This system provides near real-time alerts about natural disasters around the world and tools to facilitate response coordination, including media monitoring, map catalogues, and a Virtual On-Site Operations Coordination Centre.
- ***Grantmakers Without Borders (Gw/oB)*** (www.gwob.net)
 This system provides near real-time alerts about natural disasters around the world and tools to facilitate response coordination, including media monitoring, map catalogues, and a Virtual On-Site Operations Coordination Centre.
- ***InterAction (American Council for Voluntary International Action)***
 (www.interaction.org)
 A coalition of more than 160 U.S.-based international development and humanitarian NGOs, InterAction exists to enhance the effectiveness of its members

and foster collaboration among its members. InterAction's website provides regularly updated information on assistance provided by member NGOs to those affected by disasters around the world.

■ ***International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies*** (www.ifrc.org)

This organization carries out relief operations to assist victims of disasters and combines this with development work to strengthen the capacities of its 183 member National Societies around the world.

■ ***International Rescue Committee*** (www.theIRC.org)

Founded at the request of Albert Einstein to assist opponents of Adolph Hitler, the IRC helps people fleeing racial, religious, and ethnic persecution as well as those uprooted by war and violence.

■ ***Medecins sans Frontieres*** (www.msf.org)

This international humanitarian aid organization provides emergency medical assistance to populations in danger in more than 70 countries.

■ ***Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management (ODPEM)*** (www.odpem.org.jm)

Established by the Government of Jamaica, ODPEM is committed to taking proactive and timely measures to prevent or reduce the impact of hazards on Jamaica, its people, natural resources, and economy through its trained and professional staff; the use of appropriate technology; and collaborative efforts with national, regional, and international agencies.

■ ***Oxfam International*** (www.oxfam.org)

Oxfam International is a confederation of 13 organizations working together with more than 3,000 partners in more than 100 countries to fight poverty, suffering, and injustice around the world.

■ ***Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)*** (www.paho.org)

An international public health agency, PAHO works to improve health and living standards in the countries of the Americas. PAHO undertakes disaster preparedness, mitigation, and response activities.

■ ***Pan American Development Foundation (PADF)*** (www.padf.org)

The nongovernmental disaster relief arm of the Organization of American States, PADF is able to mobilize immediate relief funds from corporate partners, reconstruct and rebuild after initial needs are met, and train communities on how to be better prepared and protected for the next major event.

- ***Provention Consortium*** (www.proventionconsortium.org)

This global coalition of international organizations, governments, the private sector, civil society organizations, and academic institutions is dedicated to increasing the safety of vulnerable communities and to reducing the effects of disasters in developing countries. It provides a forum for multi-stakeholder dialogue on disaster risk reduction and a framework for collective action.
- ***Regional Disaster Information Center for Latin America and the Caribbean (CRID)*** (www.crid.or.cr/crid/Indexen.htm)

CRID is an initiative sponsored by six organizations that decided to join their efforts to ensure the compilation and dissemination of disaster-related information in Latin America and the Caribbean.
- ***Relief Web*** (www.reliefweb.int)

Administered by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), ReliefWeb is the world's premier electronic clearinghouse for those needing timely information on humanitarian emergencies and natural disasters—designed specifically to help the humanitarian community improve its response to emergencies.
- ***SPHERE Project*** (www.sphereproject.org)

Begun in 1997 by a group of humanitarian agencies, this project has developed a humanitarian charter and a set of universal minimum standards in core areas of humanitarian assistance. The aim of the project is to improve the quality of assistance provided to people affected by disasters.
- ***United Way International (UWI)*** (www.uwint.org)

A global network of nonprofit organizations operating in 45 countries, UWI makes grants around the world to strengthen communities and nonprofit sectors; nurture effective corporate social responsibility; and build alliances among donors, volunteers, and nonprofit thought leaders across national borders.

United Nations and Other International Organizations

- ***Coordination Center for the Prevention of Natural Disasters in Central America*** (www.cepredenac.org)

This regional coordination center strengthens capacity and reduces vulnerability to regional disasters.
- ***European Union Humanitarian Affairs Office (ECHO)***
(ec.europa.eu/echo/index_en.htm)

ECHO is one of the world's biggest donors of humanitarian aid and is composed of 25 member states of the European Union and the European Commission.

■ **United Nations, International Strategy for Disaster Reduction**

(www.unisdr.org)

ISDR is aimed at enabling all societies to become resilient to the effects of natural hazards and related technological and environmental disasters to reduce human, economic, and social losses.

■ **United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs**

(ochaonline.un.org)

OCHA facilitates the delivery of humanitarian assistance to populations and communities in need. It maintains an in-house emergency response capacity, supported by a 24-hour monitoring and alert system, to deploy staff at short notice to rapidly evolving catastrophic events. OCHA offers several information services for the disaster relief community such as www.ReliefWeb.int.

■ **World Bank Hazard Risk Management Team** (www.worldbank.org)

This group aims to reduce human suffering and economic losses caused by natural and technological disasters by helping the World Bank provide a more strategic and rapid response to disasters and promoting the integration of disaster prevention and mitigation efforts into its range of development activities.

■ **United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF)**

(ochaonline.un.org/webpage.asp?Page=2101)

A stand-by fund established by the United Nations to enable more timely and reliable humanitarian assistance to victims of natural disasters and armed conflicts, CERF provides seed funds to jump start critical operations and fund lifesaving programs not yet covered by other donors.

■ **United Nations Development Programme Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR)** (www.undp.org/bcpr)

BCPR works with partners to reduce the incidence and impact of disasters and violent conflicts and to establish solid foundations for peace and recovery from crisis—thereby advancing the UN Millennium Development Goals on poverty reduction.

■ **World Health Organization Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean** (www.emro.who.int/eha)

This organization provides information on emergency preparedness and humanitarian action in the region.

Government Agencies

- **Canadian International Development Agency** (www.acdi-cida.gc.ca)
This is the Canadian government's foreign assistance agency.
- **Japan International Cooperation Agency** (www.jica.go.jp)
This is the official website for the Japanese foreign assistance agency.
- **British Department for International Development** (www.dfid.gov.uk)
This is the official website of the British foreign assistance office.
- **U.S. Agency for International Development** (www.usaid.gov)
This is the official website of the United States foreign aid office.
- **Australian Agency for International Development** (www.ausaid.gov.au)
This is the Australian government's international aid website.

Academic and Research Institutions

- **Internet Journal of Rescue and Disaster Medicine**
(www.ispub.com/journals/ijrdm.htm)
This peer-reviewed journal is for medical professionals involved in disaster response.
- **Journal of Humanitarian Assistance** (www.jha.ac)
This forum was established to encourage communication among the diverse sectors involved in humanitarian response.
- **Natural Hazards Center at the University of Colorado, Boulder**
(www.colorado.edu/hazards)
The center's primary goal is to increase communication among hazard/disaster researchers and those individuals, agencies, and organizations actively working to reduce disaster damage and suffering.
- **Unit for Disaster Studies, University of the West Indies**
(isis.uwimona.edu.jm/uds)
This organization provides scientific information, data sources, and references that may enable a better understanding of the Earth, with special reference to the Caribbean, its active processes, and the ways people interact with the natural environment.

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Note: This was the original working group that developed the principles in 2000–2001. As a result, organizational affiliations have changed in some cases.

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