



# MORE

DISASTERS IN AN ERA OF DIMINISHING RESOURCES

# WITH LESS

EDITED BY KEVIN M. CAHILL, M.D.

FOREWORD BY H.E. NASSIR ABDULAZIZ AL NASSER

More with Less

INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS

**Kevin M. Cahill, M.D., series editor**

# More with Less

Disasters in an Era of Diminishing Resources

EDITED BY **KEVIN M. CAHILL, M.D.**

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All royalties from this book go to the training of humanitarian workers.

For Peter Hansen  
Scholar, Diplomat, Colleague, and Friend

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## FOREWORD

Disaster risk is increasing globally. Over the past decade, disasters caused by natural hazards have affected more than 2.2 billion people and killed over 840,000. The economic cost of these disasters was at least \$891 billion. These are losses to countries' welfare and to individual livelihoods and future.

In 2011 we witnessed a sequence of consecutive disasters caused by earthquakes, tsunamis and weather-related events. At the same time, the world has gone through a financial crisis that has plunged many countries into recession and negatively affected the economic growth of others. This crisis has led to intense scrutiny of expenditure and priorities. Calls for more efficiency and “burden sharing” in international and national cooperation are frequently heard.

During my Presidency of the Sixty-Sixth Session of the United Nations General Assembly, I have traveled to disaster sites and seen the effects of the tsunami in Japan, the devastation of famine in Somalia, and the largest refugee camp in the world in Kenya.

Donors who finance humanitarian relief recognize the risks and the lack of sustainability of their increasing expenditure for humanitarian situations. This pressure on resources and on vulnerability motivates us to find new solutions, rethink our strategies, and redefine our actions to ensure that every dollar spent in aid—whether development and humanitarian—will result in more resilient and sustainable cities, communities, and nations.

The positive news is that preventive action is less expensive than cure. Reducing disaster risk is about ensuring that our investments in development are not washed away when the next flood or tsunami occurs. Sometimes it's about making the right decision at the right time—decisions such as not building a school, hospital, or bridge in harm's way. Reducing disaster risk is also about being innovative, working in partnership, and striking new alliances with all relevant actors, including the private sector and civil society.

In light of their disproportionate losses, better understanding is needed about the lives of girls and women before, during, and after disaster. A gendered perspective on preparedness, relief, recovery and mitigation is essential for effective action and will provide insight into how globalization, urbanization, and environmental degradation affect women's disaster vulnerability in rich as well as poor nations. Gender relations clearly play a role in the political economy of disaster; in organizational relief and response; in community leadership and mobilization; in household preparation and family recovery; and in survival strategies in disaster-resilient communities. Specific guidelines are essential for integrating gender issues into the preparedness activities for disaster planning, as well as for ensuring provision of gender-fair assistance.

I applaud the courage of those countries that have already taken steps toward reducing disaster risk and thus saving lives and ensuring that money is spent wisely. Experience has shown that investing in disaster-risk reduction can result in significant economic returns. A number of countries have also invested in preventive measures which have yielded multiple benefits, not least in saving many lives and livelihoods.

Reducing disaster risk should not be seen as an additional expenditure, but rather an investment for a safer and more resilient world. It also empowers people to face the challenges of disaster more effectively. We must strengthen our commitment toward more preventive approaches in order to ensure that our development investments are secured—not destroyed in a matter of seconds when the next calamity happens. Countries may best meet this challenge by considering a global

action plan to reduce disaster risk. This will be a reassuring leap forward to meet the challenges of the coming decades.

H.E. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser  
President of the Sixty-Sixth Session  
of the United Nations General Assembly

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This is the twelfth volume in the International Humanitarian Affairs Book Series, seven of which have been published by Fordham University Press. A number of the books have gone into multiple reprintings, and new editions; seven have been translated into French. All of the texts—whether written solely by me, or based on chapters contributed by experts from around the world—have been intended to strengthen the emerging discipline of humanitarian action. All royalties from the series have been applied to the training of a future generation of humanitarian workers.

With deep gratitude I acknowledge the generosity of the contributors to this volume. From incredibly busy schedules they somehow carved out time to create chapters that would help focus global attention on a critical problem: how to prepare for, and respond to, disasters in an era when many traditional donors are facing their own economic crises.

My main assistant in the editing process was Jenna Felz of the Institute of International Humanitarian Affairs (IIHA) at Fordham University. Alycia Kravitz and Denis Cahill helped edit several chapters. Mr. Peter Hansen generously shared his vast knowledge of the United Nations and humanitarian community to the benefit of both the Introduction and other chapters in this text. Mr. Fredric Nachbaur and the staff of Fordham University Press provided a level of publishing expertise that I have come to admire as the series has developed.

The Fordham University family supported this project from its inception. I am particularly grateful to President Joseph McShane, S.J., to Provost Stephen Freedman, and to the Executive Director of the IIHA, Brendan Cahill.

Finally, the Foreword to this volume was contributed by H.E. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, the President of the United Nations General Assembly, Sixty-Sixth Session. I have had the privilege of serving as his Chief Advisor on Humanitarian and Public Health Issues. He identified “Disaster Preparedness and Response” as one of the four main objectives of his tenure, and this book is intended to honor that commitment and be a permanent part of the legacy of his Presidency.

From the halls of the United Nations to a sprawling refugee camp in Kenya, from the bombed-out remains of Mogadishu, Somalia, to countless shared meals in New York and Doha, I was fortunate to see the passionate, profound dedication of this most distinguished diplomat. I also was privileged to observe his steady compassion for those in need, his innate decency and modesty, his concern for his staff and, maybe most moving, his joyous love for Aziz and Muna.

## ABBREVIATIONS

BRICs	Brazil, Russia, India, and China
BWIs	Bretton Woods Institutions
CAP	Consolidated Appeals Process (OCHA)
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CERF	Central Emergency Response Fund
CFA	Comprehensive Framework for Action
CGD	Commission on Growth and Development
CSW	commercial sex worker
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DEC	Disaster Emergency Committee (UK)
DFID	Department for International Development
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
DVI	Disaster Victim Identification
EG	Educate Girls (Rajastani NGO)
G8	Group of Eight
GDACS	Global Disaster Alert and Coordination System
GDP	gross domestic profit
GHD	Good Humanitarian Donorship initiative
GIS	geographic information system
GNI	gross national income
HLTF	High-Level Task Force
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross

IDHA	International Diploma in Humanitarian Assistance (Fordham University)
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IHA	International Humanitarian Affairs (Fordham University)
IIHA	Institute of International Humanitarian Affairs (Fordham University)
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IOC	Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MIHA	Masters in International Humanitarian Action (Fordham University)
MSF	Médecins Sans Frontières
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCD	noncommunicable disease
NGO	nongovernmental organization
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
ODA	official development assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
OIC	Organisation of Islamic Cooperation
OSOCC	On-Site Operations Coordination Centre
PGA	President of the United Nations General Assembly
PIH	Partners in Health
R2P	Responsibility to Protect
SBTF	Standby Task Force
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
TEC	Tsunami Evaluation Coalition
UN	United Nations
UNDHA	United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs
UNDRO	United Nations Department for Relief Operations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNHRC	United Nations Human Rights Council
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNISDR	United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
UNRRA	United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Agency
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WEF	World Economic Forum
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization