Disasters Avoided

Analysis of action we can take to prevent situations and events turning into disasters

A short overview of our initiative

Initiative owners:

Gareth Byatt (Independent Consultant, urban resilience + industry risk & resilience)

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Ana Prados (Scientist at University of Maryland, Baltimore County)

The Disasters Avoided initiative - a one-page overview

Why we are creating it

1. Disasters continue to occur around the world, and it's important to define and show how disasters can be avoided.
2. Describing how disasters are being avoided can support action to address the root causes of disasters, not just respond to them after they happen.

What we are delivering

1. Summary case studies of disasters that have been avoided, including the role of Earth observations, supported by open access research background information.
2. A collation of information about the ethos and approach to avoiding disasters (including links to learning resources).
3. Regular communications about disasters avoided, through various channels (our website, events, media, journals etc).
4. A disastersavoided.com website as a portal to collate our material.

How we are managing it

1. Project management of an agreed scope, schedule and outputs.
2. Desktop research on our case studies + interviews with people when appropriate.
3. Producing outputs through to Sept 2024 (project commenced in Sept 2022).
4. A media & engagement plan for sharing the outputs of our work.
5. Monitoring of project metrics (communications coverage).

Disasters keep happening…

New Orleans, one day after Hurricane Katrina made landfall - late August 2005. It has been reported that more than 1,800 people died across the Gulf Coast region, with more than $100bn of damage. Photograph: Smiley N Pool/AP (published by the Guardian)
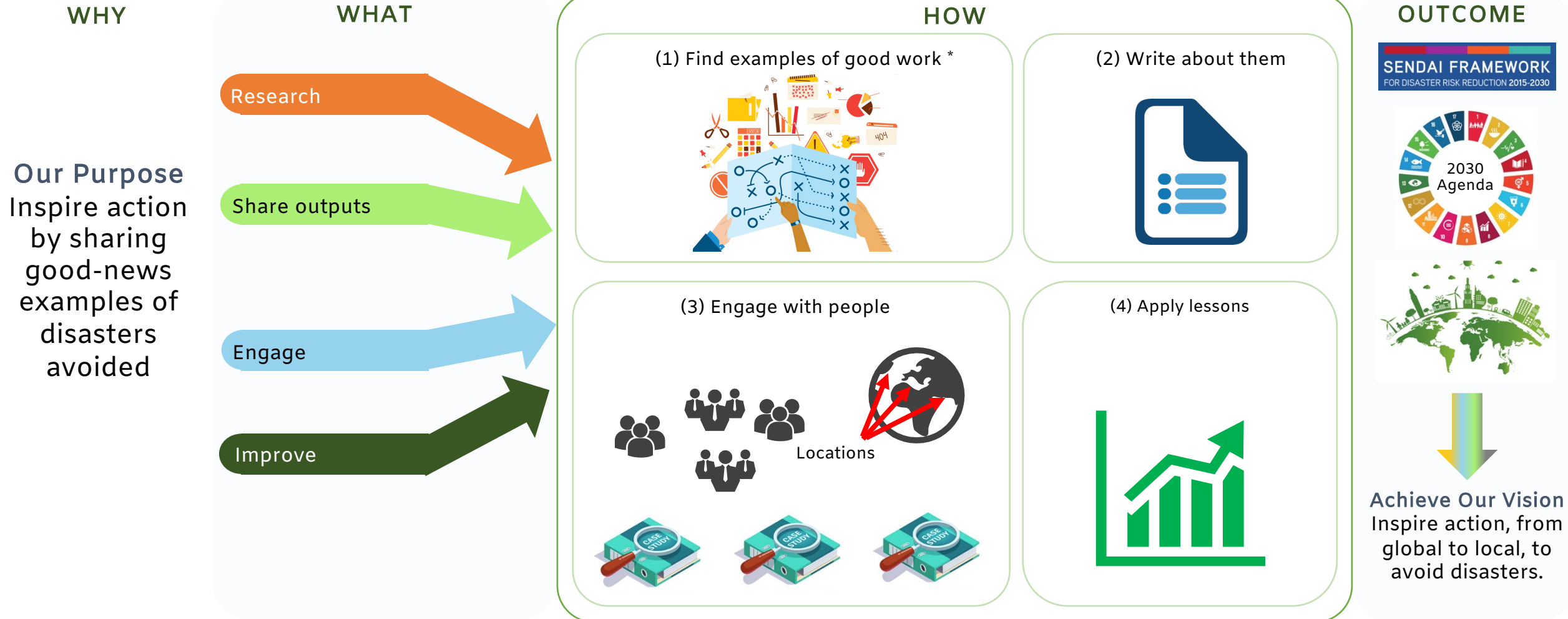
Disasters keep happening…

People on a beach, having been evacuated due to forest fires find refuge on the beach and look at a fire burning the forest in Bormes-les-Mimosas - July 2017. Photograph: Marion Leflour/AFP/Getty Images (published by the Guardian)

We are looking at how people are working to avoid disasters…

WHY

Our Purpose
Inspire action by sharing good-news examples of disasters avoided

WHAT

Research

Share outputs

Engage

Improve

HOW

(1) Find examples of good work *

(2) Write about them

(3) Engage with people

Locations

(4) Apply lessons

OUTCOME

SENDAI FRAMEWORK
FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION 2015-2030

2030 Agenda

Achieve Our Vision
Inspire action, from global to local, to avoid disasters.

* Case studies are funded by NASA Earth Sciences

DISASTERS AVOIDED

Here are some of the areas we are looking at…

Avoiding wildfire disasters
(Australia, Chile, Colorado…)

Avoiding flooding disasters
(Bordeaux, Hamburg, Viet Nam,
Bangladesh…)

Avoiding extreme heat
disasters (India, USA…)

Common factors
to avoid disasters
+ linkages
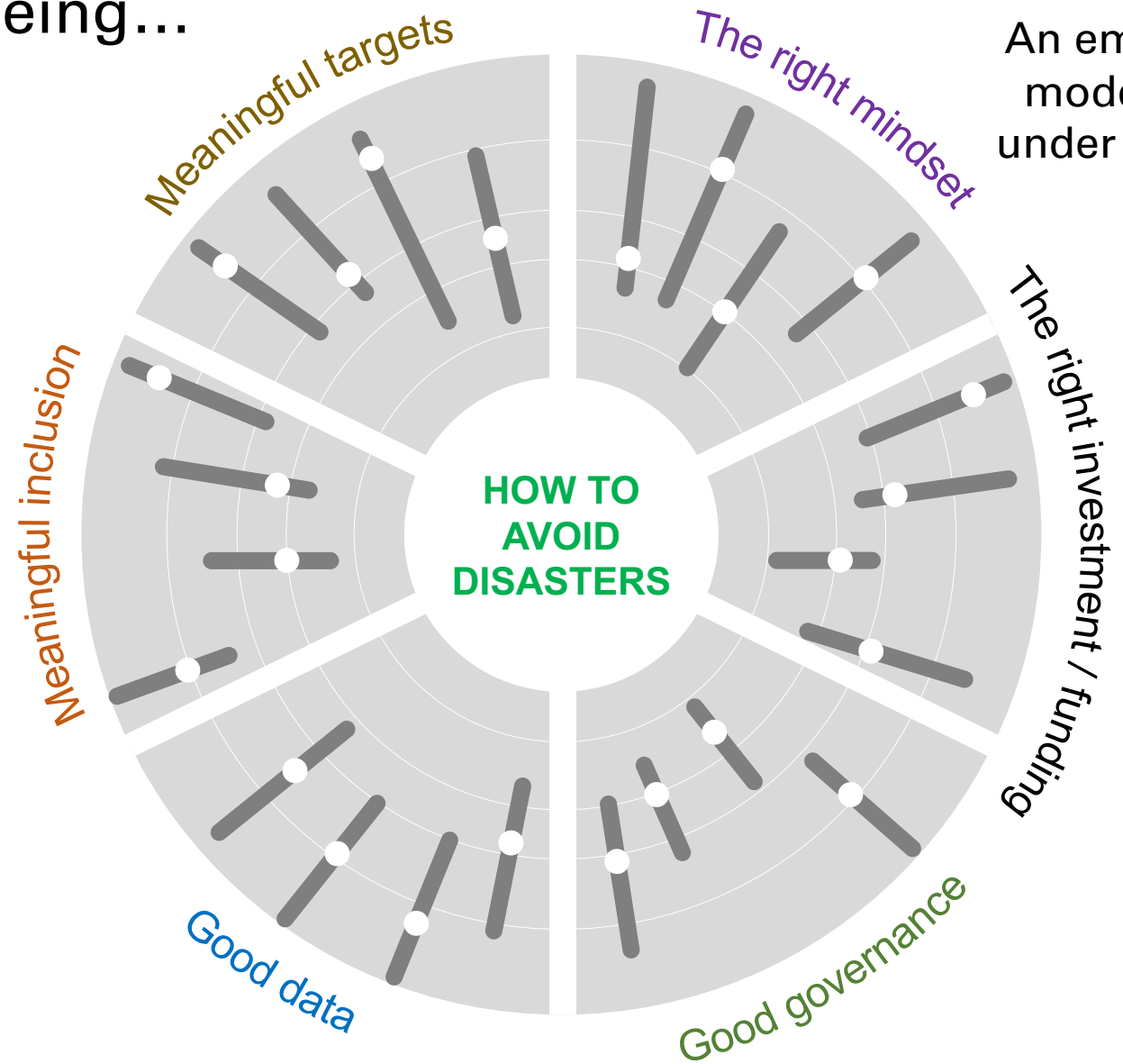
Minimising the impact
of earthquakes (New
Zealand, Japan…)

Can we avoid pandemic
disasters in future…?
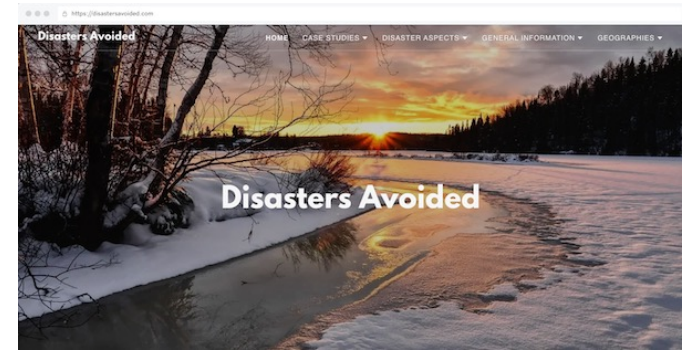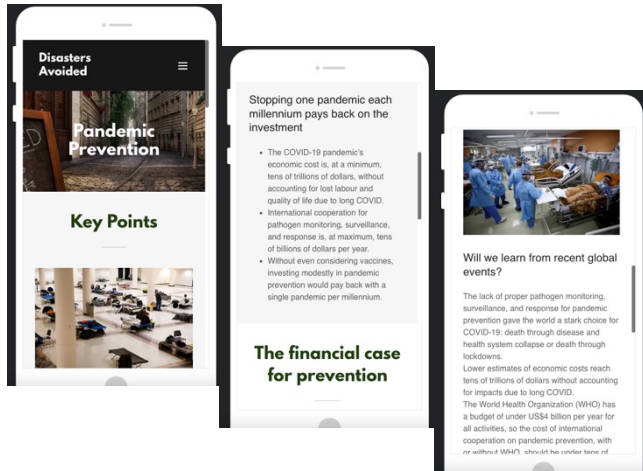
Common factors we are seeing…

1. The right mindset - invest upfront, don't wait for the event

2. The right investment / funding - the right amount, with the right benefits and payback

3. Good governance - well-informed + enforced

4. Good data - from various sources

5. Meaningful inclusion - act together (some decisions are hard)

6. Meaningful targets - agree what to strive for

An emerging model (still under review)

Meaningful targets

The right mindset

The right investment / funding

Good governance

Good data

Meaningful inclusion

HOW TO AVOID DISASTERS

We hope we can share and contribute to the global effort…

Case studies on avoiding disasters, with supporting information, will be published in various ways, including on our own website.

1. Share

Specific pieces

Specific publications

General publications

Help Inspire Action

Targeted research

Disaster Risk stakeholders

Specific audiences

State and Municipal authorities

Citizens & students

Private sector, Non-profits et al

2. Engage

3. Support

Connecting it all to action on the ground with multi-level leadership

Bangladesh flood resilience

Image credit: Catherine Davison (BBC article)