



Food and Agriculture Organization  
of the United Nations

## Governing and managing disaster risk in the agriculture sector

Webinar - 16 May 2017

### SUMMARY POINTS, QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS



#### Speakers:

Sophie Baranes, *Coordinator of the Capacity for Disaster Reduction Initiative, CADRI*

Proyuth Ly, *Expert on disaster risk management planning in agriculture sectors, FAO Cambodia*

#### Moderator:

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## Background

This first webinar on disaster risk reduction and management was presented as part of a series of webinars organized by **KORE** - the Knowledge sharing platform on resilience- within the INFORMED programme and dedicated to sharing knowledge on resilience building. This series of webinars is the result of a collaboration between EU-DEVCO and FAO strategic programme on resilience.

## Introduction

This webinar was the first of the three-webinar series on Disaster Risk Reduction and Management in Agriculture. It focused on governing and managing disaster risk in the agriculture sector.

### 1. Increasing impact of natural disasters in agriculture

Economic damages resulting from natural hazards have amounted to 1.5 trillion USD over the past decade. Climate-related disasters in particular are increasing worldwide and expected to intensify with climate change. They disproportionately affect food insecure, poor people – over 75 percent of whom derive their livelihoods from agriculture.

Every year, natural disasters decimate livelihoods and result in millions of food insecure people around the world. Small-scale farmers, herders, fisher folks and forest dependent communities are particularly vulnerable.

### 2. Importance of agriculture sector in disaster risk reduction and management

In developing countries, agriculture absorbs about 23 percent of the economic impacts of natural hazards. When only droughts are considered, this figure increases significantly to 84 percent.

Agriculture sectors (crop, livestock, forestry and fisheries) are particularly vulnerable to natural hazards. At the same time, agricultural sectors offer innovative solutions to tackle the root causes of risks.

Agricultural livelihoods can be protected from multiple hazards if adequate disaster risk reduction and management efforts are strengthened within and across sectors, anchored in the context-specific needs of local livelihoods systems.

### **3. The role of agriculture sector in the Sendai Framework and the global agenda**

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction refers to the need to protect livelihoods and productive assets including livestock, working animals, tools and seeds and calls for more coherent development policies comprising food security, and the role of social safety-net mechanisms in the realm of food security and nutrition. Further notable innovations of the Sendai Framework with high relevance for the role of sectors are:

- Embedding disaster risk reduction (DRR) within a wider resilience context including the shift to a wider multi hazard risk management approach, which includes transboundary, technological and biological hazards and disasters;
- The clear articulation of the role of disaster risk governance and emphasis for sectoral engagement in the planning and delivery of DRR; including budget allocation and sector-specific indicators to enhance accountability;
- The strong call for strengthening the use of science and technology in policy-making;
- The focus on “Build Back Better” during recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction;
- People-centered.

The importance of disaster risk reduction in sustainable development and the role of sectors have also been recognized in other global agendas, namely the Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Agreement, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Agenda for Humanity and the New Urban Agenda.

### **4. FAO’s work in governing and managing disaster risk to enhance resilience in agriculture**

Acknowledging the need to move from concept development towards tangible delivery of services at all levels, FAO contributes to improving the governance and management of disaster risk and enhancing the resilience in agriculture. In this context, the webinar addressed below three topics:

- The Institutional capacity development for disaster risk management for resilience, food security and nutrition;
- The mainstreaming of disaster risk management in the agriculture sector planning;
- Linking planning and capacity development for disaster risk management, resilience and climate change adaptation.

## Summary points

### 1. Mainstreaming disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation in agriculture sector in Cambodia

Presented by Proyuth Ly, Expert on disaster risk management planning in agriculture sectors FAO Cambodia.

Cambodia's Plan of Action for DRR in Agriculture 2014-2018 was developed covering crop sector and was expanded to cover other sub-sectors (livestock, fisheries and forestry).

As a result of Government consultations, it was concluded not to develop a stand-alone DRR document, but rather to update the existing Climate Change Priorities Action Plan for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (CCPAP) 2014-2018, by integrating DRR aspects.

DRR has been integrated into CCPAP. Technical teams of each sub-sectors drafted key DRR related actions and activities to be integrated into existing CCPAP, including below components.

- Strengthen capacities for risk prevention and reduction, effective emergency preparedness and response at all levels
- Enhance coordination mechanism e.g. ensure active membership of agriculture officers with the task to enhance coordination and complementarities between disaster management committees and agricultural planning at all levels
- Enhance early warning systems
- Promote risk transfer mechanism
- Integrate DRR and climate change adaptation measures into recovery and rehabilitation initiatives in the agriculture sector

The integration process was government-led with the full ownership of the government.

Some challenges encountered were:

- updating the existing document gave little room for integration,
- coordination with different sub-sectors,
- couldn't explicitly highlight water related management issues as it is under another ministry.

## **2. Role of sectors (agriculture) in disaster risk management planning**

Presented by Sophie Baranes, Coordinator of the Capacity for Disaster Reduction Initiative (CADRI)

DRR in agriculture includes aspects of understanding risk, governance, resilience and preparedness for response and recovery.

Challenges in mainstreaming risk reduction in agriculture sector include lack of sector specific information and data, lack of synergies with other sectors, lack of enabling environment (legislation, budget, risk information) and lack of practical and user-friendly tools for mainstreaming risk reduction.

National DRR Strategies can be used to including specific measures that promote the integration of DRR into sectoral development planning, budgeting and institutional arrangements, and to align government, private sector, civil society organization and international partners' efforts across sectors.

CADRI supports country-driven efforts to develop inclusive national DRR strategies and promotes multi-sectoral approach to capacity development in DRR.

## Questions and answers

### 1. Questions on the engagement with the private sector and civil society organizations:

#### A. How is the UN working to engage more with the private sector and to ensure alignment between Government and private sector priorities?

Private investments are a lot bigger compared to public investments and we cannot rely solely on corporate social responsibility. UN organizations engage primarily with governments and are also working to engage with the private sector. The main approach is to support governments create and enforce better frameworks, regulations and incentives to engage the private sector make risk informed decisions in their investments.

#### B. What is the role of civil society organizations in disaster risk reduction and management and how does CADRI approach them?

One of CADRI's biggest challenges is making the strategies people-centered. That is to give civil society a voice in the design of the strategies. The strategy is to be inclusive and the government appreciates that CADRI involves the private sector and civil society with the government in the lead. CADRI does not have all the answers to make this process truly meaningful, but work is being done to best advice the governments. The UN should make sure that disaster risk reduction and management strategies in sectors and at national level do take into account civil society voices.

#### C. Most of the existing cooperation between DRR policy makers and insurance companies look at "non-productive" infrastructure such as homes. How do think the involvement of the private sector can be extended to productive agriculture infrastructure and assets such as irrigation, storage, produce processing units when the focus of the private sector in DRR for the time being seems to be saving lives and not always livelihoods?

In one recent study that FAO conducted on the cost and benefit of farm level disaster risk reduction practices in agriculture, although preliminary, we are finding that investing in agriculture related infrastructure and equipment for improved resilience brings increase in net economic benefits compared to the business-as-usual practice. This means that it makes economic sense to invest in small-scale agricultural infrastructure for disaster risk reduction. However, oftentimes small-scale farmers do not have the access to credit, technology, information and markets to make the initial investment. FAO is trying to build on the study with more examples from different countries, technologies and hazards to provide the evidence and make recommendations for policy-makers to set up enabling policies to support both the small-scale farmers and private sector actors to engage in such investments.

## 2. Questions on the coordination among different sectors, level of actors and stakeholders:

### A. Hazards often cross boundaries - district, region, national boundaries - so response is needed at landscape scale but current risk governance processes are largely restricted to political boundaries - how can this be resolved? Is this a focus for CADRI and UN agencies?

Disasters and climate-related hazards indeed do not respect frontiers. It is primarily the role of the regional communities such as ECOWAS and ASEAN to coordinate at the regional level. For example, in ASEAN, there is the [ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response](#) which promotes one region, one response approach and provides a proactive regional framework for cooperation and coordination in all aspects of disaster management. However, regional coordination also can get political. For instance, in the Sahel, there have been some attempts to design regional natural resource governance frameworks, but it became complex since it involves water management which is very sensitive. CADRI mainly works at country-level but can advocate for the regional cooperation agenda.

### B. How do you coordinate sectoral planning with other sectors and planning departments as well as national planning frameworks such as National Adaptation Plans (NAP) and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDP)?

The key to coordinating sectoral planning with other sectors and national planning frameworks is for the Government to have the coordinating entity with the right convening power. Very often the issue faced in climate change and DRR is that their coordinating authorities (often Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Interior respectively) have limited convening power and leverage compared to other stronger ministries such as Ministry of Agriculture or the Ministry of Infrastructure. Attaching the coordination mechanism within the Ministry of Planning or the higher offices such as the Prime Minister's Office may be one way to enhance the convening power. There are no specific blueprint on how sectoral coordination works, but there should be attempts to integrate DRR and climate change coordination fori and host them in the right government system.

- C. It seems that governments, communities and development agencies are all pulled in to different global initiatives. How could we shift from these diverse initiatives to a more integrated and simplified policy and strategic so countries can develop integrated action plans that would facilitate governance and coordination and accountability?**

In fact, there are too many frameworks and initiatives and this issue has been raised also during [the 2017 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction](#). There has been a growing role of the Ministries of Planning and Finance and this growing role should help better determine future investment decisions when it comes to risk-informed development. This is where the coordination and centralization of risk information should be. Ultimately, these ministries are the decision makers that are responsible for the implementation of the sustainable development goal plans.

### **3. Question on gender integration:**

- A. Gender integration into agriculture, DRR and climate change adaptation is key. How do you deal with it at sectoral integration?**

The Ministry of Agriculture in Cambodia has a working group on gender to promote gender integration. There is also an agricultural policy document highlighting key actions in order to integrate gender issues into agriculture sectors. It is important that the key actions do not provide additional burden and work to women who are already burdened with high labour.

### **4. Question on the issue of conflict:**

- A. How can the topic of fragility and conflict, which mutually enforces the effects of climate change and disaster risks, be integrated?**

One of the strategic objectives of FAO's work is to build the resilience of agricultural livelihoods to threats and crises and this encompasses resilience not only to natural disasters but also to socioeconomic crises, violent conflicts, protracted crises and emergencies in food chain. We believe that reducing disaster risk and building resilience in the food and agricultural system helps to reduce the impact of disasters and conflicts. At the same time, is essential to address some of the drivers of conflict, which often are related to food security and natural resources.



## 5. Question on preparedness:

### A. What would be the key actions to prepare farming and food systems for shocks and climate change?

There is a need for very strong early warning systems, not only in terms of right information and dissemination, but also stronger governance framework for early action. This is because once early warning information reaches decision makers, oftentimes there may not be any mechanism in place that determines who is expected to take action and when. Therefore, risk governance is key. There are many possible actions such as stockpiling, getting the right forecast information and systems in place, centralizing information and making it available. However, it is also about setting up clear accountability systems and finding answers to questions such as: Who is supposed to take action? Who is making decisions? Who is accountable to make decisions when investments create more risks and no preparedness measurements are in place? Who is accountable for early action when we know famine is approaching but no one feels accountable to take the right action on time?

From a field experience, it is important to enhance the resilience of farmers to shocks. For example, diversifying farming systems so not all production is damaged during shocks is proven to be effective.

## For more information

- [Sendai Framework](#)
- [United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction \(UNISDR\)](#)
- [Building Resilience and Adaptation to Climate Extremes and Disasters \(BRACED\)](#)
- [The Impact of Natural Hazards and Disasters on Agriculture and Food Security](#)
- [Resilient Livelihoods: Disaster Risk Reduction for Food and Nutrition security](#)
- [FAO Strategic Programme on Resilience](#)
- [FAO e-learning tool 'Planning for Community Based Adapatation \(CBA\) fto climate Change](#)
- [FAO Policy Series: Disaster Risk Reduction in Agriculture \(video\)](#)



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