

Fifth Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas

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Towards Risk Informed Sustainable Development

Side Event: **Regional Strategy for Comprehensive Disaster Risk Management (CDRM) in the Agriculture and Food Security and Nutrition Sector¹**

Organizers: UNISDR and FAO

Date: 17h00 to 18h00, 7 March 2016

Place: Hall 710-B

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1 Background

1.1 The Sendai Framework and 5th Regional Platform

The member States of the United Nations reaffirmed their ongoing commitment to reduce disaster risks and the losses this cause by adopting the “Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030” at the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction held in Sendai, Japan in March 2015. This Framework is a 15-year, voluntary, non-binding agreement which recognizes that States have the primary role to reduce disaster risk but that responsibility should be shared with other stakeholders including local government, the private sector and other stakeholders. It aims for the following outcome:

“The substantial reduction of disaster risk and losses caused by disasters, both in terms of lives, livelihoods and health as well as economic, physical, social, cultural and environmental assets of individuals, companies, communities and countries.”

The Sendai Framework is a framework for development that catalyzes the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The outcome document, entitled “Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,” highlights the need for reducing disaster risk in various sectors and makes explicit reference to the fact that most SDGs might not be achieved as long as the exposure and vulnerability of people living in poverty are not addressed.

1

¹ The agricultural sector will be considered in its broadest sense throughout this document, including the crops, livestock, forests, fisheries and aquaculture sub-sectors.

Therefore, it is essential that Member States seek to implement the Sendai Framework in different development sectors and at different levels of government to achieve sustainable development through the integration of DRR in various development sectors, and this by appropriately engaging stakeholders through development planning, implementation and monitoring processes that take into account disaster risk and its link to climate change, as appropriate, while promoting the mainstreaming of disaster risk management in other relevant sectors.

To support the assessment of global progress in achieving the outcome and objective of the Sendai Framework, seven goals and four global priorities have been agreed and established, namely:

- Priority 1. Understanding disaster risk;
- Priority 2. Strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk;
- Priority 3. Investing in disaster risk reduction for resilience;
- Priority 4. Enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response and to “Build Back Better” in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction.

The four priorities of the Sendai Framework also represent the rationale for the “Guidelines towards a regional action plan on the implementation of the Sendai Framework in the Americas” approved and adopted at the Ministerial and High Level Authorities Meeting on the Implementation of the Sendai Framework in the Americas held between the 8th and 9th June 2016 in Asuncion, Paraguay.

The Sendai Framework recognizes Global and Regional Platforms for DRR as key instruments for policy and strategy development, as well as for knowledge sharing and mutual learning, building on the pivotal role that they have already played in supporting the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA).

Canada and its Ministry of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness in collaboration with the UNISDR Regional Office for the Americas (UNISDR Americas) will host the Fifth Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction of the Americas (RP17). The attendance of about 1,000 delegates, including ministers, policy makers, professionals and experts in disaster risk management is expected.

This time, a Ministerial and High Level Authorities Meeting will also take place, which together with the Regional Platform meetings will represent the first opportunity for governments and stakeholders around the continent to discuss and agree on a regional Action Plan to support the implementation of the Sendai Framework in the Americas.

Therefore, the focus will be on identifying how governments, ministries, civil society leaders, technical and financial institutions, the private sector and the media could boost the performance of activities and actions to meet with the goals set by the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 in the Americas, while developing existing capacity in the region.

1.2 Regional planning and prioritization process for CDRM in the Agriculture and Food Security and Nutrition Sector.

The countries of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) requested technical support for the design and implementation of regional initiatives aimed at preventing, reducing and managing disaster risk in the agriculture and food security and nutrition sector.

This request was expressed in the CELAC 2014 Action Plan and reiterated in the 2015 Plan where “proposals on disaster risk reduction and humanitarian assistance for the elaboration of a Strategic Regional Agenda for the Integrated Disaster Risk Management” were expressly requested to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP).

This process also responds directly to the concerns expressed by countries at the 34th session of the FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean held in Mexico City in 2016, on the need to increase disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation efforts in the sector.

In line with this request, FAO and UNISDR conducted a side event during the Ministerial and High Level Authorities Meeting on the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction held in Asuncion, Paraguay in June 2016. Its aim was to discuss the main challenges and opportunities for the CDRM for food security and nutrition (FSN) given by the implementation of the Sendai Framework in the agriculture, livestock, forestry, fisheries and aquaculture sectors in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC).

In order to deepen the discussion, a virtual consultation was held with Country Focal Points of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the CDRM focal points within Ministries of Agriculture, and other key informants in the environmental sector, intergovernmental organizations and various relevant institutions. The result of this process was reflected in the document “Guidelines and Recommendations for the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Agriculture and Food Security and Nutrition sector”: http://www.unisdr.org/files/51026_51026guidelinesforaregionaldrmstrat.pdf.

Also, the International Meeting of Ministers and High Authorities of Agriculture held in Lima on 22 and 23 June with the support of FAO, brought together representatives from 16 LAC countries in order to share experiences on the implementation of policies to promote sustainable agriculture and the strengthening of food security and nutrition. The countries agreed to work on various issues including the establishment of a virtual platform for the exchange of CDRM experiences in the agricultural sector in LAC, which would be led by the Ministry of Agriculture of Chile.

Framed within a wider context and as a next step in the development of the Regional Strategy for CDRM for the Agriculture and FSN sector, the Ministry of Agriculture of Chile along with FAO and UNISDR will host in Santiago the Technical Meeting of CDRM Focal Points in the Ministries of Agriculture of LAC countries on 22 and 23 February.

It is expected that the first draft of the Regional Strategy will be developed at the meeting, building on the progress and outcomes achieved so far and based on a more detailed identification of the gaps and common needs of LAC countries and opportunities for cross-border and regional cooperation in CDRM in the agricultural sector.

Also, the Technical Meeting will allow to establish a technical committee composed of representatives of the countries and regional institutions to provide technical support and work on building sustainability and political legitimacy for the Strategy at national and regional levels.

2 Side event on CDRM in the agriculture and FSN sector.

The agriculture and FSN sector is the first sector so far that has concretized a proactive and organized effort to develop a CDRM Regional Strategy to meet the specific characteristics and challenges of this development sector.

This initiative directly responds to the Sendai Framework approach as indicated in its guiding principles which highlight that “disaster risk reduction requires that responsibilities be shared by central Governments and relevant national authorities, sectors and stakeholders (...)” and “disaster risk reduction and management depends on coordination mechanisms within and across sectors and, and it requires the full engagement of all State institutions of an executive and legislative nature at national and local levels (...)”²

Moreover, this initiative also responds to the fact that the agricultural sector is particularly affected by disasters. FAO estimates that twenty-two percent of all damages inflicted by medium and high-intensity natural hazards in developing countries are registered within the agricultural sector. In the case of drought, the sector accounts for 80% of global damage and losses. This situation is particularly critical in LAC where the sector gathers about one third of the active population, accounts for 23% of exports and is one of the leading suppliers of food worldwide.

In a world with a growing demand for food, affected by climate change and a regional trend of degradation of natural resources, the agricultural sector in LAC is challenged to move towards resilient production systems that are more efficient and productive, preserve the natural resource base and ecosystem services, while being able to withstand risks, shocks and long-term climate variability.

This transition requires the development of specific disaster risk reduction measures involving information systems, production technology, management of natural resources, and significant changes in terms of governance, legislation, policies and public and private investment.

Main objective:

With the participation of several ministers and senior officials of the agricultural sector and other representatives of relevant national and regional institutions, the main objective of the event is to present, discuss and generate support and commitment to the process and the Regional Strategy for CDRM in the Agriculture and FSN Sector in LAC.

Expected results:

The discussion is expected to:

- Socialize and publicize the efforts of the agricultural sector for the development of the Regional Strategy to contribute to the implementation of the Sendai Framework in this sector.
- Identify recommendations, implementation and accountability mechanisms for the Regional Strategy;

- Increase the participation and commitment of countries, intergovernmental bodies and other stakeholders in the process as well as in the implementation of the Regional Strategy and, therefore, of the Sendai Framework in the agriculture and food security and nutrition sector.

The discussion is also expected to:

- Increase the understanding of stakeholders in the agriculture and FSN sector on the Sendai Framework approach and its relevance to the sustainable development of the sector.