



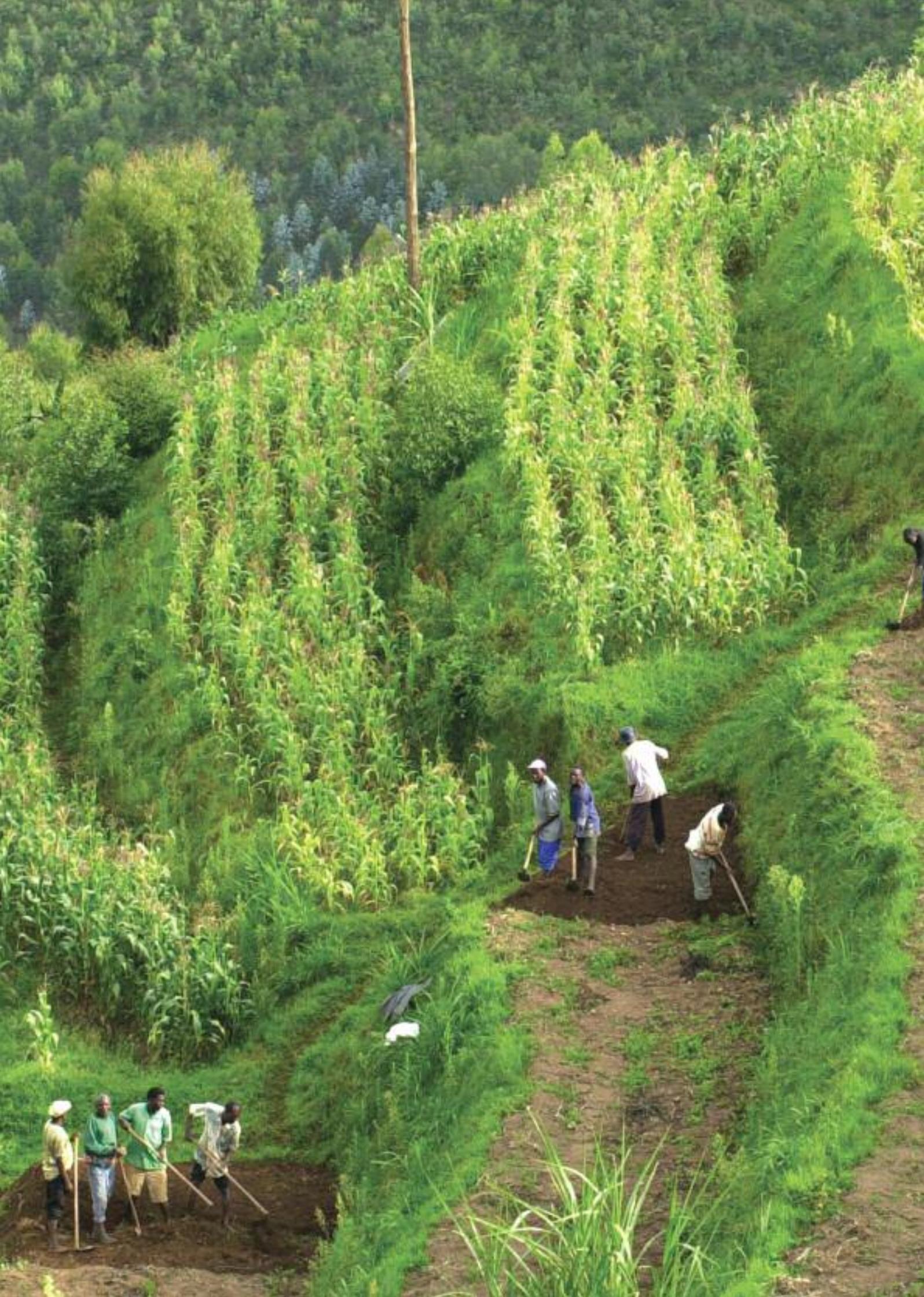
WFP Policy on Disaster Risk Reduction and Management

Building Food Security and Resilience

Policy approved November 2011



World Food Programme



Contents

Executive Summary	2
Rationale	5
Policy Foundation	8
Definitions and Concepts	10
WFP's Comparative Advantages	12
Lessons Learned	16
Partnerships	18
Principles for WFP Support to Food Security-related Disaster Risk Reduction	20
Policy Implementation	22
Financial and Resource Considerations	25
Conclusion	26
Acronyms	28

WFP Executive Board Decision

The Board approved "WFP Policy on Disaster Risk Reduction and Management: Building Food Security and Resilience" (WFP/EB.2/2011/4-A), reaffirming WFP's commitment to protecting the lives and livelihoods of the most food-insecure households and to preventing hunger and malnutrition. The Board looked forward to the development of an action plan to support implementation of the policy.

This policy was developed by the Office for Climate Change, Environment and Disaster Risk Reduction.

For additional information, please visit:
wfp.org/disaster-risk-reduction

Communities in Rwanda work together to rehabilitate degraded land, improving their food security and reducing the risks of floods and droughts.

Executive Summary

Disaster risk reduction is a central priority for WFP in light of the profound impacts that disasters have on food-insecure and vulnerable populations worldwide. In 2010, more than 50 percent of WFP's programmes addressed the risks of natural disasters and their impacts on food security, reaching approximately 80 million people.



WFP's disaster risk reduction policy focuses on building the resilience and capacity of the most vulnerable people, communities and countries, by working to ensure food and nutrition security while reducing disaster risk and protecting and enhancing lives and livelihoods.

This policy lays out WFP's mandate and comparative advantages, clarifying WFP's focused role in food security-related disaster risk reduction and management. The policy includes principles for WFP's disaster risk reduction work and a clear set of priorities for improving the quality and

effectiveness of its programmes and partnerships to support the most food insecure and vulnerable people.

Although the primary focus of the policy is on reducing natural disaster risk, many of the principles also apply to man-made disasters and complex emergencies.

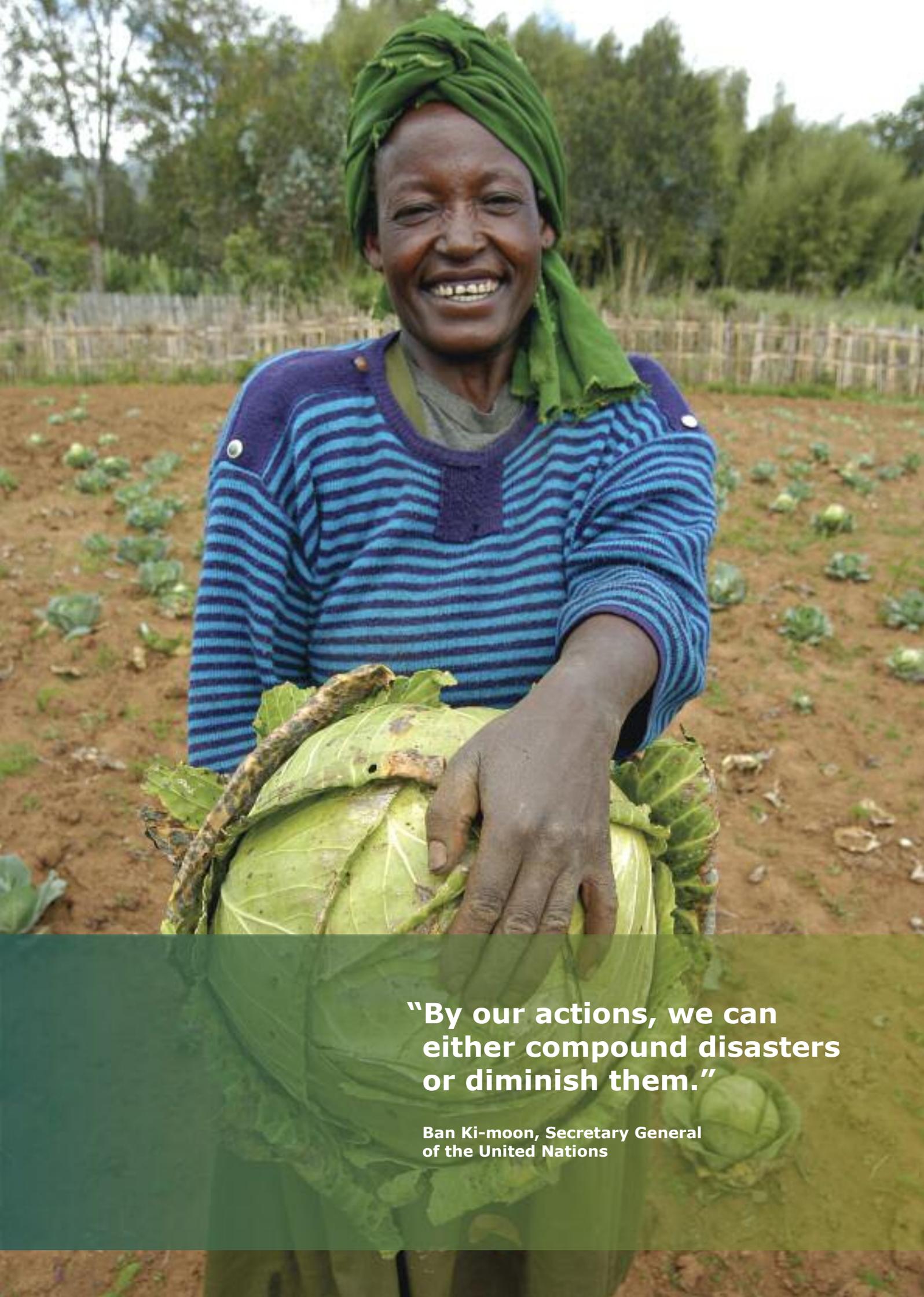
This paper supersedes the WFP Policy for Disaster Risk Reduction (WFP/EB.1/2009/5-B) and "Disaster Mitigation: A Strategic Approach" (WFP/EB.1/2000/4-A).

The policy builds on the WFP Strategic Plan (2008–2013), the WFP Enterprise Risk Management Policy (WFP/EB.2/2005/5-E/1), the WFP Gender Policy (WFP/EB.1/2009/5 A/Rev.1) and "Climate Change and Hunger: Towards a WFP Policy on Climate Change" (WFP/EB.A/2011/5-F), which outlines WFP's emerging approach to the impact of climate change on hunger.

The policy has been developed in close consultation with the Board. It incorporates findings from recent evaluations and reviews, and takes into account the policies of WFP's principal partners, including donors,¹ non-governmental organizations and United Nations agencies, and the broader global dialogue on disaster risk reduction.

The policy will be supported by an action plan for implementation, monitoring of implementation and reporting. A specific operational framework for WFP emergency preparedness and response is being developed in accordance with this policy.

1 Donor policies consulted include those of the Department for International Development (DFID). 2011. *Saving Lives, Preventing Suffering and Building Resilience: The UK Government's Humanitarian Policy*. London; Australian Agency for International Development. 2009. *Investing in a Safer Future: A Disaster Risk Reduction Policy for the Australian Aid Program*, Canberra; DFID. 2006. *Reducing the Risk of Disasters – Helping to Achieve Sustainable Poverty Reduction in a Vulnerable World: A DFID Policy Paper*. London; European Commission. 2009. *A Community Approach on the Prevention of Natural and Man-Made Disasters*. Brussels; European Commission. 2009. *EU Strategy for Supporting Disaster Risk Reduction in Developing Countries*. Brussels; United States Agency for International Development (USAID). 2011. *USAID Policy Framework 2011–2015*. Washington DC; USAID/Office of United States Foreign Disaster Assistance. 2009. "Disaster Risk Reduction" in *Office of United States Foreign Disaster Assistance: Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2009*, pp. 101–131. Washington DC; and USAID. 2006. *Office of Food for Peace Strategic Plan 2006–2010*, Washington DC.



**“By our actions, we can
either compound disasters
or diminish them.”**

**Ban Ki-moon, Secretary General
of the United Nations**



Recent evidence highlights that natural disasters have a negative impact on food security and livelihoods.

Rationale

1. Natural and man-made disasters are a leading cause of hunger and affect all dimensions of food security, including economic and physical access to food, the availability and stability of supplies, and nutrition.² Without serious efforts to address them, the risks of disasters will become an increasingly serious obstacle to sustainable development and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.³
2. Growing empirical evidence demonstrates that there is a direct correlation between disaster risk, poverty and food insecurity. Disaster losses are accentuated in poor households and communities and result in long-term consequences for food security, health, education and other critical dimensions of human welfare.⁴
3. Food-insecure people, the majority of whom live in fragile areas that are prone to natural hazards, are the least able to cope with shocks.⁵ Exposure to high levels of disaster risk and lack of capacity to manage these risks, compounded by other factors such as poor access to markets and income-generation opportunities, trap poor households in a cycle of food insecurity and poverty that quickly deteriorates into a food crisis when a disaster occurs.
4. When affected by disasters, food-insecure households often resort to detrimental coping strategies such as reducing food quality and consumption, withdrawing children from school, reducing expenditures on health care and education, engaging in environmentally harmful practices, selling productive assets, and distress migration. These households also adopt conservative risk-taking stances, which limit their ability to build and diversify their livelihoods and result in lower future income streams and longer recovery after disasters.⁶
5. Degraded ecosystems amplify the effects of droughts and floods, resulting in significant livelihood impacts from even low-intensity shocks, especially for the poorest and most food-insecure households. In Africa alone, 650 million people are dependent on rainfed agriculture in environments that are affected by water scarcity, land degradation, recurrent droughts and floods and erratic weather patterns.⁷ Climate change and increasing resource scarcity will deepen vulnerabilities to disasters in these environments.
6. In fragile States, conflict, political instability and weak institutions exacerbate food insecurity and disaster impacts. The destruction of infrastructure such as roads, and the erosion of institutions in conflict-affected areas affect lives, livelihoods, formal and traditional social protection mechanisms, food distribution systems and access to markets, all resulting in increased hunger risk.⁸

2 De Haen, H. and Hemrich, G. 2007. The Economics of Natural Disasters: Implications and Challenges for Food Security. *Agric. Econ.*, 37(s1): 31--45.

3 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). 2004. *Reducing Disaster Risk: A Challenge for Development: A Global Report*. New York.

4 United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR). 2011. *Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction*. Geneva.

5 De Haen, H. and Hemrich, G. 2007. The Economics of Natural Disasters: Implications and Challenges for Food Security. *Agric. Econ.*, 37(s1): 31--45; Pelham, L., Clay, E. and Braunholz, T. 2011. Natural Disasters: What is the Role of Social Safety Nets? SP Discussion Paper No. 1102, Washington DC, World Bank; and Vakis, R., Kruger, D. and Mason, A. 2004. Shocks and Coffee: Lessons from Nicaragua. SP Discussion Series, Washington DC. World Bank.

6 Vakis, R. 2006. Complementing Natural Disaster Management: The Role of Social Protection. SP Discussion Paper No. 0543, Washington DC. World Bank.

7 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). 2008. Challenges for Sustainable Land Management (SLM) for Food Security in Africa 25. The Regional Conference for Africa, Information Paper No. 5. Rome.

8 Teodosijevic, S. 2003. Armed conflicts and food security. ESA Working Paper No. 03-11. FAO, Rome.

7. Disasters have a significant impact on nutrition, in the immediate aftermath of a disaster and over the long term. For example, studies from Bangladesh show increased wasting and stunting rates among preschool children after floods, due to reduced access to food, increased difficulties in providing proper care and greater exposure to contaminants.⁹ Other studies highlight that more than 20 percent of variation in height in developing countries is determined by environmental factors, particularly drought.¹⁰
8. There are also compelling economic arguments for investing in disaster risk reduction as a way to protect the gains of development, prevent humanitarian emergencies, and build resilience to future emergencies and climate change.
9. Reducing disaster risk is cost-effective and often the best means of providing value for money. The Humanitarian Emergency Response Review estimates that UK£1 spent in prevention saves UK£4 in response, and warns that years of investment can disappear if risk reduction is ignored.¹²
10. WFP approaches disaster risk reduction and management from the perspective of food and nutrition security. In parts of the world where food insecurity, malnutrition, poverty and disaster risk intersect, WFP is an important partner for governments, United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and communities, supporting their disaster risk reduction efforts with a focused set of food assistance tools and strategies ranging from food security early warning, vulnerability analysis, and emergency response and recovery, to resilience building, among others.

Drought's Impact on Nutrition¹¹

Drought has severe impacts on dietary diversity and reduces overall food consumption. Examples of drought's impact on nutrition include the following:

- **In Zambia, children born in drought conditions are up to 12 percent more likely to have below-average height and weight than children born in non-crisis years.**
- **In Ethiopia, children born during a disaster are 35.5 percent more likely to be malnourished and 41 percent more likely to be stunted.**
- **In Niger, irrespective of the birth location, children born during a drought are more than twice as likely to be malnourished between the ages of 1 and 2.**

9 Del Ninno, C., Dorosh, P.A. and Smith, L.C. 2003. 'Public policy, markets and household coping strategies in Bangladesh: Avoiding a food security crisis following the 1998 floods'. *World Development* 31(7): 1221–1238.

10 Silventoinen, K. 2003. Determinants of variation in adult body height. *Journal of Biosocial Sciences*, 35:263–285.

11 Sources include: i) Gitau, R., Makasa, M., Kasonka, L., Sinkala, M., Chintu, C., Tomkins, A. and Fileau, S. 2005. "Maternal micronutrient status and decreased growth of Zambian infants born during and after the maize price Increases resulting from the southern African drought of 2001–2002". *Public Health Nutrition*, 8(7): 837–843; ii) IPCC. 2007. *IPCC Fourth Assessment Report*. Cambridge, UK, Cambridge University Press; iii) Silventoinen, K. 2003. "Determinants of Variation in Adult Body Height". *Journal of Biosocial Sciences*, 35: 263–285; and Fuentes, R. and Seck, P. 2007. *The Short-Term and Long-Term Human Development Effects of Climate-Related Shocks: some Empirical Evidence*. New York, UNDP.

12 Humanitarian Emergency Response Review (2011) commissioned by the United Kingdom's Secretary of State for International Development, and IFRC Annual Report (2008).



By working closely with communities, WFP and partners have built the resilience of vulnerable communities through cost-effective measures, such as building cereal banks and improving land management techniques.

Policy Foundation

11. The link between food insecurity and natural disasters, and the importance of preparing for, preventing and mitigating the impact of disasters are central to WFP's mission. In both emergency and development contexts, the overall aim of WFP assistance is to build the resilience and self-reliance of the most food-insecure populations.¹³
12. WFP's Mission Statement and General Regulations stipulate that WFP will "*assist in the continuum from emergency relief to development by giving priority to supporting disaster prevention, preparedness and mitigation*" – three of the central elements of disaster risk reduction.¹⁴
13. The WFP Strategic Plan (2008–2013) re-emphasizes WFP's mission in preventing hunger. Strategic Objective 2, "Prevent acute hunger and invest in disaster preparedness and mitigation measures", includes two goals:
 - Goal 1: To support and strengthen capacities of governments to prepare for, assess and respond to acute hunger arising from disasters.
 - Goal 2: To support and strengthen resiliency of communities to shocks, through safety nets or asset creation, including adaptation to climate change.
14. WFP's other Strategic Objectives are also important:
 - Strategic Objective 1, "Save lives and protect livelihoods in emergencies" focuses WFP efforts on minimizing the immediate impact of disasters on food-insecure populations, to avert the worst potential consequences of disasters.
 - Strategic Objective 3, "Restore and rebuild lives and livelihoods in post-conflict, post disaster or transition situations" includes providing support to the rebuilding of critical livelihood assets and infrastructure to improve access to food – often with the purpose of reducing risk and ensuring that these assets withstand the impact of future disasters.
 - Strategic Objective 4, "Reduce chronic hunger and undernutrition" includes efforts to reduce the enduring impact of disasters, especially on children, with a focus on improving the nutrition status of food-insecure people.
 - Strategic Objective 5, "Strengthen the capacities of countries to reduce hunger, including through hand-over and local purchase" includes efforts to improve governments' capacities in food security analysis, early warning, logistics, food security-related disaster risk reduction and management, and emergency preparedness.
15. In 2005, through the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA), the international community made disaster risk reduction a priority. WFP's Strategic Plan (2008–2013) aligned WFP's activities with this framework.
16. Disaster risk reduction is cross-cutting and bridges emergency response, recovery and development. This is recognized in the WFP Programme Category Review, which stresses that many relief and recovery operations present unique formal and informal opportunities to assist communities and local institutions in building their resilience and capacities against shocks.¹⁵ The programme

13 www.wfp.org/about/mission-statement

14 In disaster risk reduction terminology, mitigation refers to "lessening or limitation of the adverse impacts of hazards and related disasters" the Inter-Agency Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR), while in climate change contexts, mitigation refers to efforts to reduce climate change through greenhouse gas emission reductions.

15 "Programme Category Review" (WFP/EB.A/2010/11/Rev.1).

16 General Rules, Financial Regulations, Rules of the Executive Board, WFP, November 2010 edition.

17 HFA 2005–2015.

category review also highlights three priorities for WFP development programmes that directly support disaster risk reduction for food-insecure households: i) mitigating the effects of recurring natural disasters in vulnerable areas; ii) helping poor families to gain and preserve assets; and iii) helping households that depend on degraded natural resources to shift to more sustainable livelihoods, improve productivity and prevent further degradation of the natural resource base.¹⁶

Food Security and the Hyogo Framework for Action

The HFA specifically recognizes the need to “promote food security as an important factor in ensuring the resilience of communities to hazards, particularly in areas prone to drought, floods, cyclones and other hazards that can weaken agriculture-based livelihoods.”¹⁷

WFP focuses its disaster risk reduction and management efforts primarily on supporting three of the HFA priorities, in areas related to food security and nutrition: HFA Priority 2, Identify, assess and monitor disaster risks and enhance early warning; HFA Priority 4, Reduce the underlying risk factors; and HFA Priority 5, Strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels.



Disaster risk reduction is a cross-cutting priority, bridging emergency response, recovery and development.

Definitions and Concepts

17. As a concept, managing disaster risk is not new, but it has coalesced in the last decade around the comprehensive notion of disaster risk reduction. Whereas prior efforts focused on disaster preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery as separate elements in a cycle, disaster risk reduction brings together preparedness for, and mitigation and prevention of, disasters.
18. Disaster risk reduction and management are part of a consolidated framework in which disaster risk reduction is defined as *"the concept and practice of reducing disaster risks through systematic efforts to analyse and manage the causal factors of disasters, including through reduced exposure to hazards, lessened vulnerability of people and property, wise management of land and the environment, and improved preparedness for adverse events."*¹⁸
19. Disaster risk management is defined as *"the systematic process of using administrative directives, organizations, and operational skills and capacities to implement strategies, policies and improved coping capacities in order to lessen the adverse impacts of hazards and the possibility of disaster."*¹⁸
20. WFP places its disaster risk reduction and management activities in the context of broader resilience-building efforts supporting the most vulnerable people, communities and countries. Resilience is *"the ability of a system, community or society exposed to hazards to resist, absorb, accommodate to and recover from the effects of a hazard in a timely and efficient manner, including through the preservation and restoration of its essential basic structures and functions."*¹⁸
21. For WFP, building resilience is about enhancing and reinforcing the capacities, livelihoods and opportunities of the most vulnerable and food-insecure people, communities and countries in the face of an increasingly risky environment. WFP is contributing to resilience-building through interventions that meet immediate food and nutrition security needs while strengthening the ability of food-insecure people and countries to manage future risks and withstand the adverse effects of natural and man made disasters.
22. There is growing evidence that climate change will significantly increase the risk of food insecurity and undernutrition.¹⁹ As many climate change impacts will materialize through increases in the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, disaster risk reduction is a key component of adaptation strategies. Supporting governments and food-insecure and vulnerable communities in ways that enhance their disaster risk management capacities is therefore an objective of WFP that supports both reducing hunger risk and climate change adaptation efforts.
23. WFP's "Climate Change and Hunger: Towards a WFP Policy on Climate Change" (2011) highlights that mainstreaming climate change and disaster risk reduction into WFP's operations will bring important returns on investment in terms of enhanced food security and nutrition, more resilient livelihoods, and reduced need for humanitarian interventions.

Linking Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation

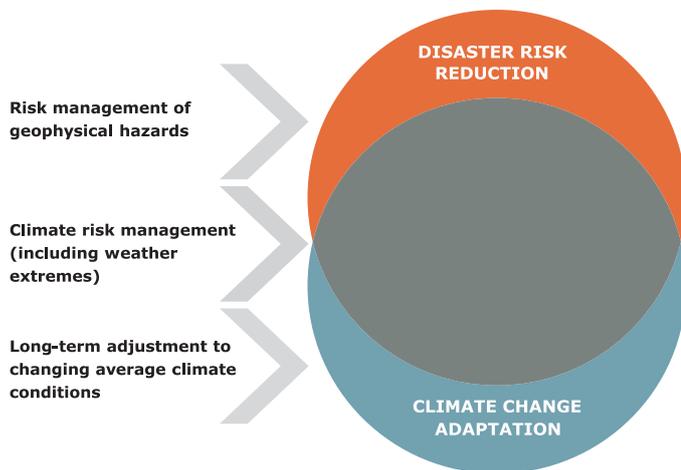
18 UNISDR Terminology on Disaster Risk Reduction. 2009. www.unisdr.org/eng/terminology/UNISDR_Terminology-English.pdf

19 Confalonieri, U. and Menne, B. 2007. Human Health. In M.L. Parry, O.F. Canziani, J.P. Palutikof, P.J. van der Linden and C.E. Hanson, eds. *Climate Change 2007: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability. Contribution of Working Group II to the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change*. Cambridge, UK, Cambridge University Press.

20 Neumayer, E. and Pleumper, T. 2007. *The Gendered Nature of Natural Disasters: The Impact of Catastrophic Events on the Gender Gap in Life Expectancy, 1981–2002*. Available at <http://ssrn.com/abstract=874965>

21 UNISDR, UNDP and IUCN. 2009. *Making Disaster Risk Reduction Gender-Sensitive Policy and Practical Guidelines*. Geneva. UNISDR.

Figure 1: Overlap Between Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction



Source: Adapted from Mitchell and van Aalst, 2008.

Gender and Disaster Risk Reduction

24. Men and women are affected differently by disasters. In inequitable societies, women are more vulnerable to natural disasters than men because of socially constructed gender roles and behaviours that affect access to resources.²⁰ In post-disaster situations, too, women are often more vulnerable than men, as their care-giving roles expand dramatically after a disaster, and experience shows that women's access to resources for recovery is often constrained.²¹
25. WFP's Gender Policy (2009) aims to create an enabling environment in WFP for promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women, reflected in policies, programmes and actions that support partner countries in addressing food and nutrition challenges.



WFP's Comparative Advantages



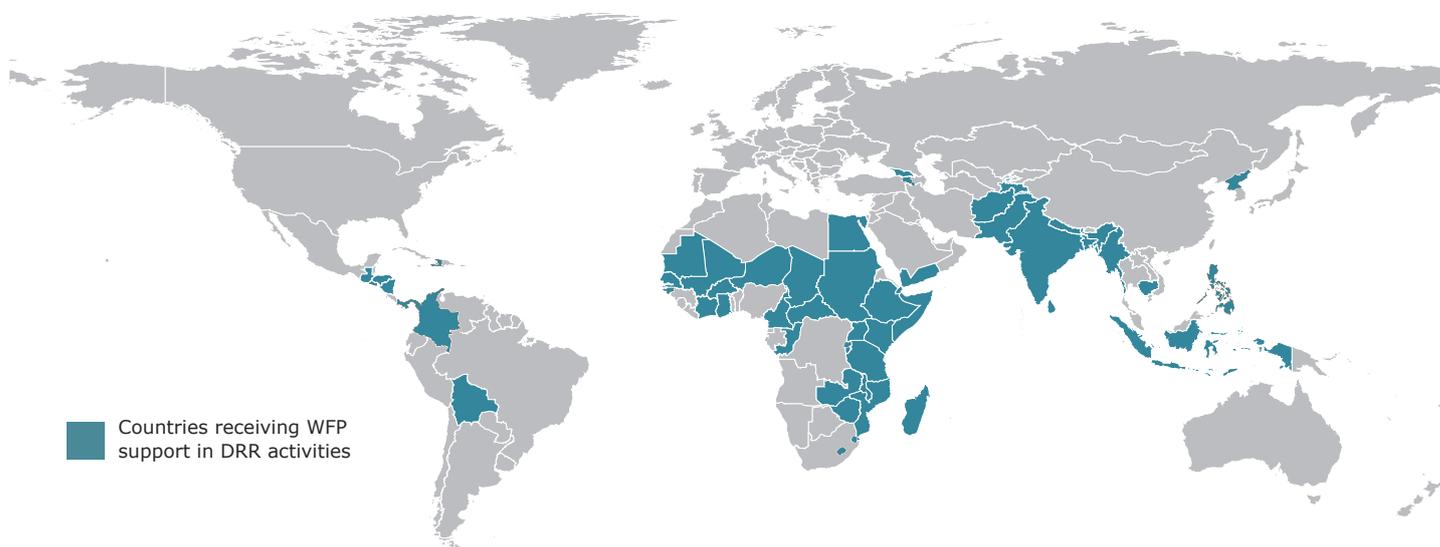
WFP's projects reach the most vulnerable people and communities, in places where food insecurity, malnutrition, poverty and disaster risk intersect.

26. WFP’s disaster risk reduction and management activities build on a body of experience consolidated over decades of work with governments and the most food-insecure communities to prepare for and respond to disasters, reduce disaster risk and build resilience. These activities are a significant part of WFP’s work in the field. According to WFP’s standard project reports, WFP and its partners implemented activities to address disaster risk in 58 of the 75 countries where

WFP operated in 2010 (77 percent), accounting for more than half of the projects it implemented. As a result, WFP has developed one of the deepest pools of technical expertise of any organization globally in food security-related disaster risk reduction, ranging from food security early warning, vulnerability analysis, and emergency response and recovery, to resilience building, among others.

Figure 2. Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) in WFP Projects – 2010

Source: Standard Project Reports



27. WFP has developed a set of focused comparative advantages.

Food Security Analysis, Monitoring and Early Warning

28. **Food security and vulnerability analysis.** Food security and nutrition monitoring, vulnerability analysis and an understanding of livelihoods in the context of disaster risk are all essential areas of knowledge for WFP in achieving its mandate. WFP has developed competence and comparative advantages at the global and national levels in these areas. In nearly all the countries where it operates, WFP delivers services and builds capacities in food security and vulnerability analysis. For

example, in more than 25 countries, it supports governments in the implementation of advanced food security monitoring systems that track food security, nutrition, market indicators and natural hazards, and provide effective analysis to support disaster preparedness, prevention and response.

29. **Hazard analysis and early warning.** Effective early warning and hazard analysis are essential for emergency preparedness, and represent core competencies of WFP. At the same time, WFP supports the development of national, regional and global food security and hazard early warning systems. WFP has led the development of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) humanitarian early warning service

WFP's Comparative Advantages

(HEWSweb), a common platform for global humanitarian early warning. In addition, it supports the development of subregional and national food security early warning systems, in close collaboration with national and regional institutions such as the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), the Central American Integration System (SICA) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

Emergency Preparedness, Response and Recovery

30. **Emergency preparedness and contingency planning.** WFP's emergency preparedness and contingency planning are critical to ensuring readiness to respond to both man-made and natural disasters and to reducing their impact on vulnerable populations. This capacity has made WFP a front-line actor in disaster preparedness worldwide; WFP is transferring knowledge and capacities to partner governments, whenever conditions allow. For example, in Haiti, WFP provides assistance to the Government's preparation for disasters through stand-by agreements with partners and the pre-positioning of supplies and equipment. In 2010, these efforts enabled the Government, WFP and its partners to respond quickly to Hurricane Tomas and Haiti's cholera epidemic.
31. **Emergency response.** WFP is a leading global humanitarian actor. Its emergency operations reduce the impact of disasters on food and nutrition security and help people start to recover. Whenever possible, these activities contribute to reducing the risks of future disasters.
32. **Recovery and rehabilitation.** WFP works with governments and affected communities to support food and nutrition security-related recovery efforts to build resilience and reduce the long-term impact of disasters. For example, WFP supports activities that help re-establish food security and livelihoods, rehabilitate infrastructure and improve risk

management capacities. Other WFP-supported activities such as school feeding meet immediate food needs, help children return to school, and re-establish normal life in post disaster situations. During recovery, WFP also tries to ensure the best possible synergies between food assistance and other sectoral programmes to support transition.

Building Resilience and Protecting the Most Vulnerable

33. **Building community resilience through food assistance programmes.** In 2010, WFP supported more than 22.5 million people in almost 10,000 of the most food-insecure communities in the world, improving access to food and reducing risk through food for assets programmes that improve livelihoods by catalysing community-based processes. These programmes supported specific efforts to build resilience through activities such as soil and water conservation, land and productive infrastructure rehabilitation, and training in disaster risk management and livelihood protection for community members. Although few impact evaluations are available, those that are – including from Ethiopia and Kenya – show evidence of significant increases in food security as a result of these interventions. In Bangladesh, WFP's Enhancing Resiliency project, implemented with the Government and NGO partners, has assisted 30,000 food insecure households with raising their homes above flood levels, and has trained 1.3 million women in disaster preparedness since 2001. Other activities, such as support to Purchase for Progress and local purchase also build resilience by improving livelihoods.
34. **Social protection and productive safety nets.** Increasingly, social protection mechanisms and safety nets are seen as important policy options and tools for managing the risk of natural disasters²² and supporting pro-poor climate change adaptation.²³ Social protection programmes and safety nets, if correctly designed, have the potential not only to protect but also

22 Pelham, L., Clay, E. and Braunholz, T. 2011. Natural Disasters: What is the Role of Social Safety Nets? SP Discussion Paper No. 1102. Washington DC, World Bank.

23 Newsham, A., Davies, M. and Bene, C. 2011. Making Social Protection Work for Pro-Poor Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation. Background paper. Brighton, UK, Institute of Development Studies.

24 World Bank. 2011. Building Resilience and Opportunity: The World Bank's Social Protection and Labor Strategy 2012–2022 Concept Note. Washington DC.

significantly to promote the livelihoods of poor people.²⁴ WFP supports the development and implementation of food security and nutrition-related safety nets and social protection mechanisms. For example, in Uganda, in partnership with the Government and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), WFP established the Karamoja Productive Assets Programme, which uses food assistance to meet seasonal food needs while building productive assets, such as new rainwater harvesting structures that improve water availability for agricultural and livestock production and reduce the impact of drought.

35. **Innovative risk finance, transfer and insurance for food security.** Working with partners, WFP supports governments and communities in the development of risk finance, transfer and insurance initiatives directed at reducing the risk of hunger and protecting livelihoods. In Ethiopia, through the Livelihood Early Assessment and Protection (LEAP) project, WFP supports the Government of Ethiopia in establishing a system that integrates advanced early warning with contingency planning to trigger a contingent finance pool, provided by the World Bank and other donors for scaling up the Productive Safety Net Programme and protecting livelihoods from drought. Another recent initiative is the R4 Rural Resilience Initiative, a partnership with Oxfam America, which integrates community-based disaster risk reduction, asset-creation programmes, risk transfer – including an innovative insurance-for-work mechanism – and livelihood strengthening, supported by traditional donors and the private sector.

Capacity Development with National and Regional Institutions

36. **National capacity development and policy dialogue.** WFP works with governments to develop capacity in disaster risk reduction and management in its areas of comparative advantage including humanitarian assistance, food and nutrition security, livelihoods enhancement, vulnerability analysis, emergency preparedness, early warning, contingency planning and emergency logistics, social protection, resilience building, and support to the development of national policies



and plans that address the impact of disaster risk on hunger and malnutrition.

37. **Regional capacity development and policy dialogue.** WFP works with regional institutions to develop capacity in disaster risk reduction and management in the same areas of comparative advantage, helping these institutions serve their Member States better and develop regional services and tools, such as regional early warning systems.
38. **Support to national and regional food security and disaster risk reduction policy and strategy.** At the strategic and policy levels, WFP contributes to the articulation of national and regional strategies that take into account food security risks and vulnerabilities, supporting opportunities to enhance national and regional capacities in disaster risk reduction and management.

Coordination and Leadership

39. **Inter-agency coordination and leadership.** WFP discharges important functions at the inter-agency level on behalf and in support of the broader international community. WFP co-leads the food security cluster with FAO and leads the logistics cluster and the emergency telecommunications cluster. It also co-chairs the IASC sub-working group on preparedness, which aims to strengthen and promote inter-agency preparedness, contingency planning and early warning across the humanitarian community. Finally, WFP plays a major role at the country level, providing leadership in disaster risk reduction within United Nations country teams, including in Bangladesh, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Mozambique, the Sudan, Uganda and Zambia.

Lessons Learned

There is wide recognition, especially among national governments, of WFP's contribution over the years to building national and local capacities in disaster risk reduction and management through capacity development, resilience building, livelihoods protection and enhancement programmes and other initiatives addressing the needs of the most vulnerable and food-insecure populations. However, the evidence base on which to build increasingly effective disaster risk reduction interventions needs to be deepened and systemized across WFP.

In spite of the limitations, recent experience and evaluations provide important lessons for WFP to improve its disaster risk reduction work. For example, recent impact evaluations from Ethiopia and Kenya demonstrate that WFP's interventions supporting natural resource management, infrastructure rehabilitation and disaster risk reduction objectives contributed to sustainable increases in household and community-level food security, supporting long term resilience-building in traditionally food-deficit areas.²⁵

Other recent experience from WFP operations and evaluations from Ethiopia, Ghana, Haiti, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malawi, Nepal, Niger and Pakistan also help identify some of the requisites for implementing effective risk reduction and resilience-building activities, and some of the challenges. These include the following:

- **National and local government ownership is essential for successful disaster risk reduction; WFP must ensure that its programming is aligned with and supportive to the national policy context.**
- **The timely availability of resources and technical assistance during programme design and implementation are key success factors for WFP programmes.**
- **Stronger partnerships with specialized organizations can enhance the quality and outcomes of WFP's programmes, such as those that support infrastructure development and engineering works.**
- **WFP interventions, especially when they support the restoration of natural resources, need to take into account the scale and timeframe required to achieve impact.**
- **WFP's analytical and programming tools need to take increasing account of the changing nature of disaster risks and the complex interactions among food insecurity drivers, including poverty, resource scarcity, environmental degradation, price volatility and climate change.**
- **Whether in emergency, transitional or development contexts, WFP programmes can offer opportunities for supporting vulnerable communities' efforts to protect their assets and livelihoods, reduce risks and build resilience against future shocks.**
- **Recent large-scale emergencies, including those in Haiti, Niger and Pakistan, have underscored the need to continue enhancing WFP's disaster risk management and emergency preparedness and response capacities through a WFP-wide approach.**

²⁵ Ngigi, S.; Wanjiku, M.; Wambua, F.; Karuti, S.; Home, P.; and Njigua, J. 2011. FFA Impact Evaluation: Food for Assets Project PRRO 10666 Kenya Rainwater Association, Nairobi, Kenya; WFP. 2005. Report on the Cost Benefit Analysis and Impact Evaluation of Soil and Water Conservation and Forestry Measures. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; and UNDP. 2007. *Human Development Report 2007/2008 – Fighting Climate Change: Human solidarity in a divided world*. New York, USA.



Partnerships

40. The ability of countries and communities to manage risks depends on a range of contextual factors. WFP's role is to contribute to national and local efforts to reduce the impact of disasters on food security and nutrition, by leveraging its comparative advantages to support governments and food-insecure communities. Whether in natural disaster-prone areas or fragile States, WFP can only do this by forging and working within strong partnerships with a broad set of actors, including national governments, regional institutions, United Nations agencies, NGOs, other humanitarian and development actors, civil society organizations, research institutions and the private sector.
41. National governments hold the primary responsibility for disaster risk reduction and are WFP's main partners. WFP works with governments in every country where it operates to reduce hunger and malnutrition. In nearly all of these countries, this includes efforts to strengthen government capacity, based on national priorities and requirements.
42. Throughout the United Nations system, WFP plays an important role in disaster risk reduction, with an emphasis on food assistance, emergency preparedness and vulnerability analysis. In addition to a leading role in the IASC, WFP is an active member of the UNISDR system, working closely with the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction Secretariat.
43. Working with the other Rome-based United Nations agencies is a priority for WFP. In 2009, under the Rome-based Partnership for Disaster Risk Management, WFP, FAO and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) adopted a common conceptual framework for disaster risk reduction and management based on the HFA and UNISDR definitions. This has led to several initiatives (see box).

Rome-Based Partnership for Disaster Risk Management

Under the Rome-based Partnership for Disaster Risk Management, WFP, FAO and IFAD are exploring ways of jointly promoting better risk assessment and reduction, preparedness and early warning, and response and rehabilitation, focusing on field collaboration in food insecure countries with high disaster risks. Examples include the following:

- **A joint disaster risk management workshop organized by WFP and FAO in late 2010 identified at least nine joint efforts under way across Eastern and Southern Africa, and opportunities for strengthening collaboration in the field. WFP and FAO are now looking at how to replicate this experience in other regions.**
- **The WFP and IFAD weather risk management facility supports access to innovative risk management mechanisms, such as weather-index insurance, to promote food security.**
- **WFP is collaborating with FAO and other partners in the development of innovative approaches that bring together disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and mitigation for enhanced food security, through the Climate-Smart Agriculture initiative.**

44. WFP recently signed Memoranda of Understanding with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). These agreements are designed to clarify the roles of the respective agencies and their leadership in areas of comparative advantage, and to help improve the effectiveness of field-level collaboration.
45. Partnerships are also being strengthened at the regional level. WFP's regional bureaux are leading efforts to forge partnerships with institutions such as the Economic Community of West African States, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, SADC, CILSS and SICA for enhancing food security-related disaster risk reduction, early warning and emergency preparedness activities.
46. Strengthening collaboration with NGOs is another priority for WFP. In 2010, WFP collaborated with nearly 2,000 NGOs, almost 90 percent of which were local NGOs or community-based organizations, in 162 projects in 66 countries all around the world. NGO partners provide critical technical capacity, learning and knowledge sharing, resources and relationships with communities.
47. Finally, WFP is strengthening partnerships to support learning and the development of best practices and innovations through collaboration with leading institutions and research centres such as the Overseas Development Institute, the International Development Research Center, the International Institute for Climate and Society of Columbia University, and the United Kingdom Met Office Hadley Centre. Working with the Swiss Development Cooperation, WFP is also developing a virtual knowledge centre on food security and disaster risk reduction, which will facilitate the sharing of knowledge and capacities and promote the improvement of food security-related disaster risk reduction programming.



From to policy to practice: WFP works closely with communities and partners to address climate and disaster risk.

Principles for WFP Support to Food Security-related Disaster Risk Reduction

48. Building on lessons from WFP's experience, its comparative advantages, the changing nature of hunger risks and best practice in disaster risk reduction, this policy identifies a set of principles to guide WFP disaster risk reduction activities in the future. These include the following.
49. WFP focuses its disaster risk reduction efforts on its food assistance mandate and comparative advantages, targeting the most vulnerable households and countries whose coping and adaptive capacities are insufficient to ensure that they can meet their food and nutrition requirements during and after disasters.
50. WFP systematically applies the best possible food security and vulnerability analysis to determine the most effective way to address hunger and malnutrition. It selects the most effective tools for delivering disaster risk reduction outcomes, whether these tools are conditional or unconditional, food, cash or voucher transfers, capacity or service development, or other food assistance tools.
51. WFP must continue to invest in emergency preparedness to maximize the effectiveness of its emergency response activities. Increasingly this has to include developing national and regional capacities to prepare for and respond to food crises, and ensuring inter-agency preparedness for humanitarian emergencies.
52. WFP supports governments in the development of national disaster risk reduction policies, plans and programmes related to food security, including through capacity development activities. WFP country strategies and activities must be developed to support national policies and plans, reflect national and local contexts, and be aligned with United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and common country assessment processes.
53. WFP support to food security-related disaster risk reduction and resilience building must take into account the increasing impacts of climate change, conflict and other drivers of food insecurity, with specific attention to women and children.
54. WFP promotes partnerships to support food and nutrition security and resilience building outcomes, engaging a broad spectrum of actors such as governments, vulnerable communities, United Nations agencies, civil society, NGOs, research institutions and the private sector. This allows WFP to leverage comparative advantages and engage in broader efforts to build resilience – when possible, jointly with partners and other actors – contributing to lasting results.
55. WFP emphasizes participatory approaches to disaster risk reduction at all levels, working with governments, partners and communities to foster effective links among national, local government and community plans and priorities.
56. WFP seeks to generate multiple outcomes from its programmes and to maximize their impact and sustainability by integrating disaster risk reduction principles into all stages of programming, and identifying opportunities for reducing disaster risk while improving food security.
57. WFP must identify outcomes, scale and timeframe clearly, to ensure that its programmes are designed to deliver effective results.

58. In designing programmes that support national objectives, WFP must always consider the possibility of finding alternative and complementary instruments and interventions, and must leverage opportunities to integrate action.
59. WFP must ensure adequate technical assistance for both programme development and implementation, working closely with national authorities, as well as key partners such as FAO, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and UNDP. Where this is not possible, WFP will consider alternative food assistance instruments whose technical soundness can be assured.
60. WFP must ensure that women and men are equally involved in vulnerability assessments and in the prioritization and design of projects. Working closely with its partners, WFP will take advantage of women's skills and knowledge in areas such as natural resources management and social networks, to maximize resilience-building efforts. In addition, WFP will ensure that the burdens and opportunities created in programmes are equitable and appropriate.



Policy Implementation

61. WFP has already established significant internal capacity in disaster risk reduction related to food assistance. Nevertheless, as disaster risks to hunger grow in complexity and WFP continues to evolve into a food assistance organization, capacity enhancement in strategic and technical areas is needed. To implement this policy, WFP will focus on the following priorities, in line with the Strategic Plan:
- i) Improve the capacity and effectiveness of emergency preparedness and response mechanisms in both WFP and the wider humanitarian system, including interagency support systems.
 - ii) Intensify WFP's capacity development in and policy support to food security related disaster risk management, focusing on global, regional and national institutions – including those for food security, disaster management, social protection and related areas – and partner organizations.
 - iii) Improve WFP's capacity to analyse the links among disaster risk, hunger and other drivers of food insecurity at the national and global levels, including the impact of climate variability and change, and conflict.
 - iv) Increase the quality and impact of WFP's activities to build the resilience of food-insecure and vulnerable communities against disaster risks, including those posed by climate change – through asset creation, social protection, climate change adaptation, local purchase, and other food assistance tools.
 - v) Consolidate critical partnerships to improve programme design and implementation and ensure continued learning and development of best practices, with FAO, IFAD, UNDP, other United Nations organizations, NGOs, civil society organizations, national actors and research institutions.
 - vi) Improve monitoring and evaluation of the impact and cost effectiveness of WFP disaster risk reduction efforts, including resilience-building activities and emergency preparedness and response systems.



Drainage and irrigation systems help reduce disaster risk and improve livelihoods.



Financial and Resource Considerations

62. To a large extent, WFP's programmes are already designed to deliver disaster risk reduction outcomes, which are budgeted in the existing Programme of Work and incorporated into the Management Plan.
63. However, services and support systems, capacity development and initiatives to enhance the quality of programmes require additional resources. These include extra-budgetary resource requirements in: i) disaster risk reduction and resilience building; and ii) emergency preparedness. Both of these have been identified as priority areas for investments of extra-budgetary resources in the 2012 Management Plan.
64. Resources are needed to support the development of WFP disaster risk reduction capacity in the priority areas outlined in the previous paragraph. These additional investments are estimated at US\$5–6 million per year over four years, and will be coordinated under a specific action plan for corporate capacity development in disaster risk reduction led by the Policy, Planning and Strategy Division and incorporated into the WFP Management Plan.
65. The Management Plan also incorporates efforts to improve emergency preparedness and response which are being coordinated under the Preparedness and Response Enhancement Project for which a specific action plan is also being developed.
66. Taken together, these initiatives will ultimately result in a more cost-effective and sustainable set of programme activities being implemented by WFP.

(left) A joint programme between the Ethiopian government and WFP, MERET gets chronically food-insecure communities involved in environmental rehabilitation and sustainable income-generating activities that improve livelihoods.

Conclusions



67. At the centre of WFP’s concern are the most food- and nutritionally insecure and vulnerable people – those normally living in the most marginal and high-risk areas in countries prone to disasters. Disasters have dramatic impacts on the lives and livelihoods of these vulnerable people, undermining their fragile development gains and condemning them to a continued struggle for subsistence and survival.
68. Reducing the disaster risks faced by these populations is at the heart of WFP’s mission and mandate. WFP’s disaster risk reduction policy therefore focuses on building resilience by ensuring food security for the most vulnerable people, while reducing their disaster risk and protecting and enhancing their livelihoods.
69. As climate change, population growth and environmental degradation are increasing disaster risk, this policy provides a basis for WFP’s work with governments and food insecure communities, to reinforce their capacity and build resilience against disaster risks to food and nutrition security.

(right) Working with vulnerable groups such as women and children living in the most marginal and high risk areas, it is possible to enhance resilience to emerging risks, such as climate change, environmental degradation, and population growth.



Acronyms used in the document:

CILSS	Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel
DFID	Department for International Development
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
HEWSweb	Humanitarian Early Warning Service
HFA	Hyogo Framework for Action
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
NGO	non-governmental organization
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SICA	Central American Integration System
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UNISDR	Inter-Agency Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WMO	World Meteorological Organization

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In Karamoja, Uganda, communities are creating assets – like these dams – to better manage droughts and reduce food shortages and malnutrition.