***Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations***

**FAO Statement to the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)**

**Geneva, May 2011**

The vision of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is a world free of hunger and malnutrition for present and future generations, where agriculture contributes to improving the living standards of all, especially the poorest, in an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable manner.

With 925 million people worldwide suffering from chronic hunger and malnutrition, and as the world’s population is estimated to rise to 9.1 billion by 2050, an increase in food production of 100 percent in developing countries and of 70 percent at global level will be required.

Meeting the demand of the population growth will place additional high pressure on the agriculture, forestry, fisheries and aquaculture sectors to provide food, feed and fibre, as well as income, employment and other essential ecosystem services. In addition, these sectors and local communities must also respond to the emerging challenges of climate change, continuing urbanization and transboundary threats from animal and plant pests and diseases, as well as food safety hazards and nuclear accidents. Throughout, the world faces increases in frequency and intensity of natural hazards, changing climatic patterns and growing food chain crisis threats. This situation calls for a significant increase of efforts seeking to improve disaster risk management systems, including current approaches and practices for risk reduction and emergency responses, and linking these to long-term climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies and measures.

In developing countries, two out of three people living in rural areas depend mainly on agriculture and natural resource-based livelihoods and are regularly exposed to climatic hazards and other risks. More than half of the population at the global level is currently living in urban areas (expected to reach 70 percent by 2050) and is dependent mainly on food purchases. Therefore, FAO is taking a key role as partner agency to promote disaster risk reduction (DRR) for food and nutrition security with the objective to enhance the adaptive capacities and resilience of countries, and in particular, those of food insecure, vulnerable households in rural and urban settings.

In its new strategic framework 2010-2019, FAO prioritizes actions for DRR within its Corporate Strategic Objectives, focusing on *“Improved preparedness for and effective response to food and agricultural threats and emergencies”*. Using DRR as an integral part of its wider approach to disaster risk management, FAO is aiming to reduce the vulnerability of people before, during and after disasters, focusing on capacity development of individuals, organiations and enabling environment at the local, national, regional and global levels, including urban and rural areas. This approach to DRR is also essential as a key entry point to climate change adaptation (CCA) and linked to FAO’s work on development and humanitarian assistance. Sustainable DRR strategies in agricultural sectors must incorporate short- and long-term perspectives, be geared to climate change adaptation and be integrated into sustainable recovery and development.

FAO provides early warning services and technical expertise for risk reduction in agriculture, and livestock, forestry (including on wild fires), and fisheries and aquaculture. FAO advises on sustainable management of natural resources including stronger urban-rural linkages and approaches and practices to reduce climate risks and risk exposure for food and nutrition security. FAO assists in developing institutional and community capacities, and supports policy formulation, planning and implementation of DRR and its links with CCA in the agricultural sectors.

In this context, FAO consolidated its ongoing DRR work into a new Framework Programme on Disaster Risk Reduction/Management for food and nutrition security. This programme guides FAO’s assistance to member countries in the implementation of DRR measures in a more integrated, programmatic and long-term manner, with greater coherence and strategic direction, while harnessing good practices and technical capacities of sectoral departments. Interventions under the Framework Programme are tailored to country’s or region’s specific strengths and needs and delivered in a demand and modular responsive manner. Interventions are organized around four main pillars which together correspond closely with priority areas of the Hyogo Framework for Action. These pillars are: (i) institutional strengthening and good governance for DRR in agricultural sectors; (ii) information and early warning systems on food and nutrition security and transboundary threats; (iii) preparedness for effective response and recovery in agriculture, livestock, fisheries and forestry; and (iv) good practices, processes and technologies for mitigation and prevention in farming, fisheries and forestry,.

The new framework programme demonstrates FAO’s commitment to the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action in partnership with governments, UN agencies, non-governmental organizations and civil society. It responds to the need for closer collaboration and clarified roles and responsibilities between DRR actors and sectoral agencies at all levels to ensure sound implementation of the objectives of the Hyogo Framework for Action. This effort contributes to strengthening cross-sectoral linkages with national DRR platforms and with other global, regional and local stakeholders in DRR.

As partner organization of the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, FAO continues to focus on and contributes to a better understanding and acting on the linkages between the increasingly complex food and agricultural systems and the deepening vulnerabilities across a wider range of populations. Against this background, there is an urgent need to enhance the resilience of agriculture livelihoods to threats and emergencies in a more significant and integrated manner and to strengthen the food and nutrition security of farmers, fishers, pastoralists, foresters and vulnerable people who are hungry in an acute and/or chronic way.