



**OFFICIAL STATEMENT BY  
THE FEDERAL DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA TO  
THE THIRD SESSION OF THE GLOBAL PLATFORM FOR  
DISASTER RISK REDUCTION  
(8-13 MARCH 2011; GENEVA, SWITZERLAND)**

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Madame Chairperson, for the past 7 years, Ethiopia has realized sustained economic growth registering an average annual growth of 11 percent. While we intend to maintain the momentum through the new Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) and maximize the achievement of these growth targets, we are also aware of the impact of disasters, which have become more pronounced in terms of frequency, intensity and coverage, in rolling back the social and economic gains that we have painstakingly achieved together with our development partners. These disasters which are exacerbated by significant changes in the climate were mostly managed in the past through the conventional crises management approach.

The Hyogo Framework of Action (HFA) has led to a realisation in the country that Disaster Risk Management (DRM) is a more effective and economic way of mitigating the effect of disasters. It inspired the Government of Ethiopia to undertake a Business Process Reengineering (BPR) which changed the focus from reactive crises management to a comprehensive and proactive DRM. A new institutional structure called Disaster Risk Management and Food Security Sector (DRMFSS) within the Ministry of Agriculture was established in 2008 to implement the new approach. DRMFSS adopted the full cycle of DRM (consisting of prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response, recovery and rehabilitation) to guide the undertaken programmes with a redirected focus on DRM. The HFA was adopted as the guiding principle while the new approach was aligned to existing development policies and strategies of GoE, including agricultural development policies where DRM issues were pivotal.

From a policy perspective, Ethiopia has a National Policy of Disaster Prevention and Management, which was promulgated way back in 1993. The Policy underwent revision (in the form of *National Policy and Strategy on Disaster Risk Management*) given the redirected focus and approach on DRM and is currently used to guide DRM activities in the country. Complementing the draft revised DRM Policy is the DRM Strategic Programme and Investment Framework which is intended to harmonize DRM initiatives for a more effective implementation and efficient utilization of resources. This framework is fully aligned to the country's five year Growth and Transformation Plan and is directed to realise the poverty-eradication targets contained in the Plan.

With the redirected focus on DRM the government has shifted from an *ad hoc* assessment based response to an early warning system and disaster assessment-based response. To make the DRM programme implementation in the country well-informed the government has launched a programme on **Disaster Risk Profiling** for every district in the country. Such a comprehensive risk analyses system not only feeds into DRR plans and programmes at community levels but also informs the kind of **early warning systems** that are needed in location-specific contexts, besides leading to the preparation of comprehensive **contingency plans** for every district. The new system also entails strengthening of preparedness for a timely and effective response. This includes creation and operationalization of strategic food reserves at various locations in the country.

Ethiopia has well-designed DRR programmes that address the vulnerabilities associated with populations in chronically food insecure parts of the country. The **Productive Safety Net Programme**, is the biggest safety net programme in sub-saharan Africa that is enabling the rural poor that is vulnerable to shock and are facing chronic food insecurity, develop assets and become food self-sufficient. PSNP supports rural transformation process, prevents long-term consequences of short-term food inaccessibility, encourages households to engage in production and investment, and promotes market development by enhancing household purchasing power. Jointly supported by the GoE, several donors and other partners, PSNP reaches almost 7.8 million chronically food insecure people in over 300 districts. The success of this programme can be gauged from the fact that a sizeable proportion of beneficiaries *graduate* out from the programme and become self-sufficient while the proportion of food insecure households in the country has appreciably declined.

To make the programme more effective, a **Risk Financing** mechanism has been designed to scale-up the public works programme under the PSNP in the event of an impending disaster – thus, ensuring the livelihoods of the vulnerable populations. Needless to say that such a mechanism is linked to the early warning system and an effective contingency planning process. Further, a sizeable **contingency fund** of US\$ 160 million has been created with support from partners.

The Government of Ethiopia is intrinsically committed to a full cycle implementation of DRM. Business Process Reengineering, new institutional structure, policy revision and framework of implementation are some manifestations. The government has ensured that the process followed is fully participatory and with the full engagement of donors and development partners. It facilitated the establishment of national and sub-national platforms on DRM where the government, donors and development partners have opportunities to discuss and take joint decisions.

Madame Chairperson, Ethiopia envisages strengthening its DRM potential and capability through building upon the tasks accomplished and effecting an era of meticulously planned strategies, besides continuing with cross-sharing of information and knowledge both regionally and globally. With the DRM Strategic Programme and Investment Framework, we also envisage and are optimistic in the comprehensive and harmonized approach to DRM that we are undertaking.

It is our appeal and hope that our donors and development partners support us in sustaining our current initiatives and in the operationalization of the DRM Strategic Programme and Investment Framework so as to realize our common aspiration to reduce the risks and impacts of disasters through the establishment of a comprehensive and integrated disaster risk management system within the context of sustainable development.

Thank you, Madame Chairperson.