

**WFP POLICY ON DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND
MANAGEMENT: BUILDING FOOD SECURITY AND
RESILIENCE**



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“By our actions, we can either compound disasters or diminish them.”
Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Disaster risk reduction is a central priority for WFP because 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.

This policy orients WFP in its activities to reduce disaster risk and build resilience through an approach that is consistent with WFP’s mandate, mission and comparative advantages and with the Hyogo Framework for Action. Although the primary focus of the policy is on reducing natural disaster risk, many of the principles also apply to human-incurred disasters and complex emergencies.

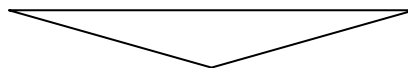
This paper supersedes the WFP Policy for Disaster Risk Reduction (WFP/EB.1/2009/5-B) and Disaster Mitigation: A Strategic Approach (WFP/EB.1/2000/4-A). It takes into account the Board’s guidance, WFP’s latest experience and a series of regional consultations requested by the Board, from which inputs from more than 190 organizations were collected.

This policy builds on the WFP Strategic Plan (2008–2013), and complements the WFP gender policy (WFP/EB.A/2009/5-A/Rev.1) and the WFP enterprise risk management policy (WFP/EB.2/2005/5-E/1). It also builds on “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. Finally, the policy takes into account the policies of WFP’s principal partners, including donors, non-governmental organizations and United Nations agencies.

The policy will be supported by a series of operational frameworks such as the WFP emergency preparedness and response framework (2011).¹

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 security while reducing disaster risk and protecting and enhancing lives and livelihoods.

DRAFT DECISION



The Board approves “WFP Policy on Disaster Risk Reduction and Management: Building Food Security and Resilience”, affirming the Organization’s commitment to building resilience and preventing hunger through preparedness, mitigation and prevention.

¹ Under Preparation for EB.2/2011.

RATIONALE

1. Natural 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 achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.³
2. Growing evidence, including the United Nations Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction (2011), demonstrates empirically that there is a direct correlation between disaster risk and 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 sectors.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, mean that poor households are often trapped in a cycle of food insecurity and poverty that quickly deteriorates into a food crisis when a disaster occurs. In fragile states, conflict, political instability and weak institutions amplify the impact of disasters on food security.
4. When affected by disasters, many food-insecure households resort to harmful coping strategies such as reducing food quality and consumption, withdrawing children from school, selling productive assets, reducing expenditures on health care and education, and distress migration. These households also adopt conservative risk-taking stances, which limit their ability to build and diversify their livelihoods, resulting in lower future income streams, longer recovery after disasters and poverty traps.⁶
5. Research shows that disasters have a significant impact on nutrition, in the immediate aftermath of a disaster and over the long term. For example, a study of the determinants of variation in adult height found that more than 20 percent of variation in height in developing countries is determined by environmental factors, particularly drought.⁷

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 Department for International Development (DFID). 2006. *Reducing the Risk of Disasters – Helping to Achieve Sustainable Poverty Reduction in a Vulnerable World: A DFID Policy Paper*. London.

⁴ United Nations. 2011. *2011 Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction*. New York.

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 Silventoinen, K. 2003. Determinants of variation in adult body height. *Journal of Biosocial Sciences*, 35: 263–285. A selection of other relevant studies includes 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; Silventoinen, K. 2003. Determinants of Variation in Adult Body Height. *Journal of Biosocial Sciences*, 35: 263–285, and others.

6. 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.⁸ The impact of a drought or flood can be multiplied several times by degraded ecosystems, resulting in significant livelihood impacts from even low-intensity shocks, especially for the poorest and most food-insecure households.
7. There are also compelling economic arguments for investing in disaster risk reduction. Addressing disaster risks offers an opportunity to protect the gains of development, prevent humanitarian emergencies, and build resilience in the face of increasing disaster risk and climate change. Building resilience is cost-effective and often the best means of providing value for money. The Humanitarian Emergency Response Review (HERR) estimates that UK£1 spent in prevention saves £4 in response, and warns that years of investment can disappear if risk reduction is ignored.⁹

POLICY FOUNDATION

8. 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.¹⁰
9. 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 as defined by the Inter-Agency Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR).¹¹
10. 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.
11. 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

⁸ FAO. 2008. *Challenges for Sustainable Land Management (SLM) for Food Security in Africa* 25. The Regional Conference for Africa, Information Paper No. 5.

⁹ Humanitarian Emergency Response Review (2011) commissioned by the United Kingdom's Secretary of State for International Development, and IFRC Annual Report (2008).

¹⁰ www.wfp.org/about/mission-statement.

¹¹ In disaster risk reduction terminology, mitigation refers to “lessening or limitation of the adverse impacts of hazards and related disasters” (UNISDR), while in climate change terms, mitigation refers to efforts to reduce climate change through greenhouse gas emission reductions.

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, disaster risk reduction and management, and preparedness, which can generate lasting gains in terms of reducing the impact of disasters on hunger and nutrition.
12. Disaster risk reduction cuts across programme categories. The WFP programme category review reiterates that disaster risk reduction is a priority for WFP development programmes, highlighting three priorities 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.¹² The programme category review highlights that many relief and recovery operations present unique formal and informal opportunities to assist communities and local institutions in building their own resilience and capacities against shocks.¹³

HYOGO FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION

13. In 2005, through the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA), the international community made disaster risk reduction a priority. In 2008, WFP aligned its activities within this framework through its Strategic Plan (2008–2013). The HFA identifies five priorities for action:
1. making disaster risk reduction a priority;
 2. improving risk information and early warning;
 3. building a culture of safety and resilience;
 4. reducing the risks in key sectors; and
 5. strengthening preparedness for response.
14. 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”.¹⁴
15. Although all WFP Strategic Objectives can contribute to reducing disaster risk, WFP focuses its disaster risk reduction and management efforts primarily on supporting three of the HFA priorities:

¹² General Rules, Financial Regulations, Rules of the Executive Board, World Food Programme, November 2010 edition.

¹³ “Programme Category Review” (WFP/EB.A/2010/11/Rev.1).

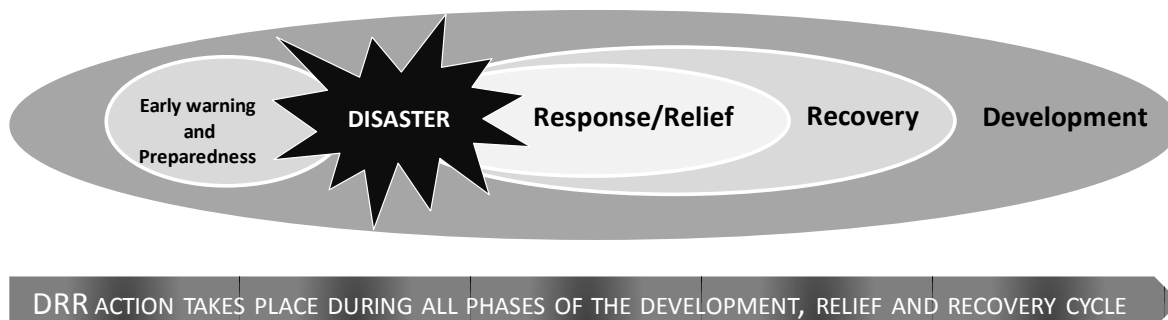
¹⁴ HFA 2005–2015.

- **HFA Priority 2, “Identify, assess and monitor disaster risks and enhance early warning”:** WFP supports governments, communities and other partners in food security and vulnerability analysis and monitoring, and early warning.
- **HFA Priority 4, “Reduce the underlying risk factors”:** Nearly all WFP food security and food assistance programmes at the community level, particularly asset-creation programmes, help protect, rebuild and develop critically needed assets and infrastructure, with the objectives of enhancing food security, improving livelihoods and reducing disaster risk.
- **HFA Priority 5, “Strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels”:** WFP’s capacities in emergency preparedness and response support partner governments, communities and regional institutions in ensuring effective response to disasters, reducing their impact on food-insecure populations.

WFP’S CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND MANAGEMENT

16. As a concept, reducing 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 in a more integrated framework that bridges emergency response, recovery and development.¹⁵

Figure 1: Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Diagram



Adapted from: *World Bank, Building Resilient Communities*

17. Within this framework 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”.¹⁶

¹⁵ Rome Partnership for Disaster Risk Management. *Disaster Risk Management in Food and Agriculture*. In 2009, under the Rome-based Partnership for Disaster Risk Management, WFP, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (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.

¹⁶ UNISDR Terminology on Disaster Risk Reduction. 2009. www.unisdr.org/eng/terminology/UNISDR-Terminology-English.pdf.

18. 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”.¹⁶
19. Disaster risk management applies disaster risk reduction approaches in a continuum from response, through recovery, to development (Figure 1):

Disaster response: Effective delivery of humanitarian assistance can greatly reduce the potential impact of a disaster.¹⁷ For WFP this means the effective and timely provision of food assistance to save lives and livelihoods during and after disasters, and support to overall coordination in emergency response through WFP’s cluster responsibilities.

Disaster recovery programmes afford an opportunity to rebuild livelihoods and reduce disaster risk. For WFP, this means supporting activities that help disaster-affected food-insecure populations rebuild and recover livelihood capacities and assets, ensuring that these can withstand and mitigate the impact of future disasters by reducing exposure to disaster risk.

Development provides an opportunity to achieve long-term gains in reducing disaster risk. However, development that does not take into account disaster risk can exacerbate the impacts of disasters. For WFP, this means: i) contributing to building national and local capacities; and ii) integrating disaster risk reduction principles and activities into development programmes that enable the poorest people to meet their short-term food needs in ways that build longer-term human and physical assets, so as to reduce exposure to hazards, mitigate the impact of disasters and increase preparedness.

Linking Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation

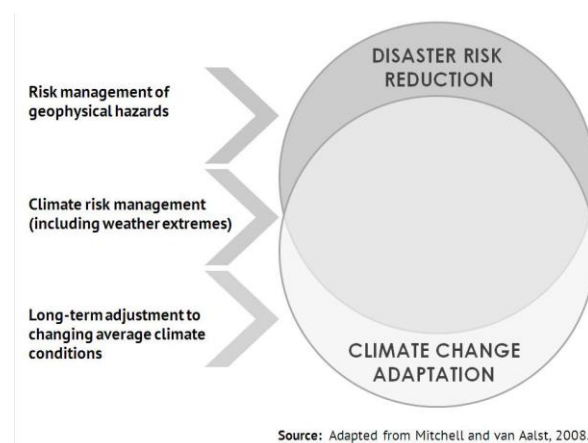
20. There is growing evidence that climate change will significantly increase the risk of food insecurity and undernutrition.¹⁸ As many climate change impacts will materialize through shifts in the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, disaster risk reduction is a key component of adaptation strategies, and the first line of defence against climate change. Supporting governments and food-insecure and vulnerable communities in ways that enhance their disaster risk management capacities is therefore an objective of WFP and also supports climate change adaptation efforts.
21. Disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and social protection strategies converge around the objective of building resilient communities. 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”.¹⁶ For WFP, building resilience means ensuring the food security of the most vulnerable, while reducing disaster risk and protecting and enhancing livelihoods, whether in a humanitarian or a development setting.

¹⁷ DFID. 2006. *Reducing the Risk of Disasters – Helping to Achieve Sustainable Poverty Reduction in a Vulnerable World: A DFID Policy Paper*. London.

¹⁸ Confalonieri, U. & 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.

22. 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 protected development gains, as well as avoided interventions (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Overlap Between Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction



Gender and Disaster Risk Reduction

23. 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.¹⁹ 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.²⁰
24. WFP’s gender policy (2009) aims to create an enabling environment in WFP for promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women, as reflected in policies, programmes and actions that support partner countries in addressing food and nutrition challenges. To achieve this in disaster risk reduction activities, WFP needs to ensure that women and men are equally involved in vulnerability assessments and in the prioritization and design of projects. WFP and its partners also need to take advantage of women’s skills and knowledge in areas such as natural resources management and social networks, to maximize resilience-building efforts. Finally, WFP and its partners have to ensure that the burdens and opportunities created in programmes are equitable and appropriate.

¹⁹ Neumayer, E. and Pluemper, 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>.

²⁰ UNISDR, UNDP and IUCN. 2009. *Making Disaster Risk Reduction Gender-Sensitive Policy and Practical Guidelines*. Geneva, UNISDR.

WFP OPERATIONAL CAPACITY AND COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGES IN DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

25. 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 reduce disaster risk, build resilience, and prepare for and respond to disasters. Today, WFP is a leading actor in the delivery of disaster risk reduction services and outcomes in parts of the world where food insecurity, poverty and disaster risk intersect, using a focused set of food assistance tools ranging from vulnerability analysis to early warning and from emergency response to capacity building.
26. WFP's mandate to support disaster prevention, preparedness and mitigation for the most food-insecure communities, combined with this experience, provides WFP with a set of clear comparative advantages in areas ranging from analysis, capacity development and operational capacity to strong inter-agency leadership.
27. The scale of these activities in the field is impressive. According to WFP's standard project reports, WFP implemented activities to address disaster risk in 58 of the 75 countries where it operated in 2010 (77 percent), accounting for more than half of the projects it implemented. These activities include the following.
28. ***Emergency preparedness and contingency planning.*** WFP's emergency preparedness and contingency planning facilitate effective responses to disasters that reduce the impact on vulnerable populations. In Haiti, WFP provides assistance to the Government to prepare 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.
29. ***Emergency response.*** WFP emergency operations reduce the impact of disasters and help people recover as quickly as possible. Whenever possible, they support activities to reduce the risks of future disasters.
30. ***Food security and vulnerability analysis.*** WFP develops and builds capacity in food security and vulnerability analysis and monitoring systems. In more than 25 countries, WFP supports governments in the implementation of 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.
31. ***Hazard analysis and early warning.*** WFP supports the development of early warning systems based on its food security and hazard monitoring capacity. WFP has led the development of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) humanitarian early warning service (HEWSweb), a common platform for humanitarian early warning. In addition, WFP has developed sub-regional and national early warning systems, including in Central America and Madagascar.

Figure 3. Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) in WFP Projects – 2010



Source: Standard Project Reports

32. ***Building community resilience.*** 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 included specific efforts to build resilience through activities such as soil and water conservation, the rehabilitation of productive infrastructure, and training in disaster risk management and livelihood protection for community members. In Bangladesh, WFP’s Enhancing Resiliency project, implemented with the Government and non-governmental organization (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 Purchase for Progress and local purchase, also support resilience building by improving livelihoods.
33. ***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 disasters²¹ and supporting pro-poor climate change adaptation.²² It is now recognized that social protection programmes and safety nets, if correctly designed, have the potential not only to protect but also significantly to promote the livelihoods of poor people.²³ 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 (KPAP), 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.
34. ***Innovative risk finance, transfer and insurance for food security.*** Working with partners, WFP is supporting governments and communities in the development of risk finance, transfer and insurance initiatives directed at reducing the risk of hunger and protecting livelihoods. For example, WFP has helped the Government of Ethiopia to develop an integrated risk management system that supports its food security safety net.

²¹ 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.

²² 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.

²³ World Bank. 2011. *Building Resilience and Opportunity: The World Bank’s Social Protection and Labor Strategy 2012–2022 Concept Note.* Washington DC.

The system 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 (PSNP) and protecting livelihoods from drought.

35. ***National capacity development and policy dialogue.*** WFP works with governments to develop capacity in relevant areas of disaster risk reduction and management, including food security vulnerability analysis, emergency preparedness, early warning, contingency planning and emergency logistics, and to support the development of national policies and plans that address the impact of disaster risk on hunger and malnutrition.
36. ***Inter-agency coordination and leadership.*** WFP co-leads the food security cluster with FAO and leads the logistics cluster and the emergency telecommunications cluster, where it is responsible for providing support to inter-agency contingency planning, preparedness and early warning, and for coordinating emergency response. WFP 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. WFP is also collaborating with partners in the development of innovative approaches that bring together disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and mitigation, and food security objectives, for example through “climate-smart agriculture”. 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.

PARTNERSHIPS

37. To contribute effectively to disaster risk reduction efforts, WFP must ensure effective partnerships with a broad set of actors, including national governments, regional institutions, United Nations agencies, NGOs, other humanitarian and development actors, civil society organizations and the private sector.
38. 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.
39. 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 ISDR Secretariat.
40. Working with the other Rome-based United Nations agencies is a priority for WFP. Under the Rome-based partnership on disaster risk management, WFP, FAO and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (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.²⁴ WFP and IFAD’s weather risk management facility supports access to innovative risk management mechanisms, such as weather-index insurance, to promote food security.

²⁴ For example, 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, as well as opportunities for strengthening collaboration in the field.

41. 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). All of these include the objective of enhancing collaboration in disaster risk reduction to address the needs of the most vulnerable and food-insecure populations.
42. 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 and the Central American Integration System for enhancing food security-related disaster risk reduction and emergency preparedness activities.
43. 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 and resources to reinforce WFP's efforts.
44. Partner NGOs also contribute innovations in disaster risk reduction. For example, building on a successful model tested in Ethiopia, WFP and Oxfam America have engaged in a joint disaster risk reduction initiative, the R4 Rural Resilience Initiative, 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.

LESSONS LEARNED

45. Recent experience from WFP operations and evaluations from Ethiopia, Ghana, Haiti, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malawi, Nepal, Niger and Pakistan illustrate some of the challenges faced in implementing effective risk reduction and resilience building activities. Major lessons include the following.
46. Delayed transfers or irregular resource flows, limited time frames for implementation, inadequate resources for non-food items, and limited availability of technical assistance for the design and implementation of activities reduce the overall effectiveness of WFP programmes.
47. National and local governments have the primary responsibility for disaster risk reduction, and government ownership is essential to successful disaster risk reduction. WFP's contributions must be aligned with and contribute to national disaster risk reduction platforms and frameworks.
48. WFP's analytical tools need increasingly to take into account the changing nature of disaster risks and their links with other drivers of food insecurity, including resource scarcity, environmental degradation, price volatility, climate change, the coping mechanisms that food-insecure populations employ to manage risks, and the opportunities for using food assistance to help reduce risks and build resilience.
49. WFP must ensure strong technical partnerships on the ground. Lack of technical rigour and weak partnerships with specialized organizations can jeopardize a project's success. This is particularly true of engineering works, but also of simple community-based asset-generating programmes.
50. The design of some WFP interventions – especially food-for-assets programmes that restore and protect natural resources – needs to take into account the scale required to achieve impact.

51. The time frame required to achieve successful impact is also important. While some activities can be implemented within the context of an emergency operation or protracted relief and recovery operation, other activities, such as the implementation of a large-scale community-based watershed management programme, require a longer time frame.
52. Recent large-scale emergencies, including those in Pakistan, Haiti and Niger, have underscored the need to enhance and consolidate WFP's emergency preparedness and response capabilities through a whole-of-organization approach that ensures that WFP continues to fulfil its humanitarian mandate.

EMERGING PRINCIPLES

53. Building on lessons from WFP's experience, its comparative advantages, the emerging policy and risk landscape and best practice in food assistance and disaster risk reduction, this policy identifies a set of emerging principles to guide WFP disaster risk reduction activities in the future. These include the following.
54. **WFP will focus its efforts within its food assistance mandate and comparative advantages, targeting the most vulnerable households whose coping and adaptive capacities are insufficient to ensure that they can meet their food and nutritional requirements during and after disasters.** Participatory approaches will be emphasized, to improve targeting and create ownership.
55. National governments are the primary actors in ensuring national food security and reducing disaster risk. **WFP supports governments in the development of national disaster risk reduction policies, plans and programmes and through capacity development activities in food assistance-related disaster risk reduction.** WFP must align its activities with national policies and plans and ensure that interventions reflect national and local contexts, to enhance efficiency, sustainability and national ownership.
56. **WFP interventions should seek to generate multiple outcomes and maximize their impact and sustainability** by integrating disaster risk reduction principles into all stages of programming, and identifying opportunities to improve food security while reducing disaster risk.
57. **WFP interventions will focus efforts on building the resilience of the most food-insecure and vulnerable communities,** taking into account the increasing impacts of climate change and other drivers of food insecurity, with specific attention to women and children.
58. **WFP will develop and facilitate partnerships to support resilience building, engaging a broad spectrum of actors** such as governments, vulnerable communities, United Nations agencies, civil society, NGOs, research institutions and the private sector. This requires new and more flexible approaches to programme development and implementation.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

59. WFP has already established significant internal capacity in disaster risk reduction related to food assistance. Nevertheless, recent experience highlights the need for further capacity enhancement in strategic areas, to keep pace with the emerging challenges and evolving risks to food security.

60 Implementation of this policy requires WFP to focus on the following main priority areas, in line with the Strategic Plan:

- i) **Augment the capacities and improve the effectiveness of global, regional and national emergency preparedness and response mechanisms in both WFP and the wider humanitarian system**, including interagency support systems.
- ii) **Increase the quality and impact of WFP's policies, programmes, strategies and activities for enhancing the resilience of food-insecure vulnerable communities** against disaster risks, including those posed by climate change – through asset creation, social protection, climate change adaptation, local purchase, relevant policy support, and other food assistance programmes and services – and increase WFP's capacity to develop and implement these programmes.
- iii) **Intensify WFP's capacity development efforts in food security-related disaster risk management**, focusing on regional and national institutions – including those for food security, disaster management, social protection and related areas – and partner organizations.
- iv) **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 the changing nature of disasters, through improved tools, services and capacities.
- v) **Consolidate critical partnerships and alliances to ensure continued learning and sharing of knowledge and best practices, improved programme design and more effective programme implementation** among FAO, IFAD, 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**, allowing WFP to focus its activities where it has the most impact in both addressing immediate food security needs and building longer-term resilience.

FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE CONSIDERATIONS

61 Most of the funding for WFP's disaster risk reduction activities is mainstreamed into the Organization's budget. As a result, WFP has a deep pool of technical expertise in areas that include emergency preparedness and response, food security and vulnerability analysis, and resilience building. However, to improve the quality of programmes and implement the requirements of this policy, WFP needs additional resources in a number of strategic areas.

62. One major initiative with an operational focus is already under way. The Preparedness and Response Enhancement Project aims to improve WFP's emergency preparedness and response capacities.

63. Additional resources are needed to support a more holistic development of WFP disaster risk reduction capacity, including through enhanced analytical tools for linking food security, disaster risk reduction and emerging climate and environmental risks; strengthened resilience building strategies and approaches; stronger partnerships with FAO, stand-by partners, NGOs, research institutions and others; improved monitoring and evaluation systems for better assessment of the cost effectiveness and impact of WFP interventions; and training and capacity development for WFP and partners. To support this work, extra-budgetary resources will be sought from donors.
64. These additional investments will be coordinated under an action plan for corporate capacity development in disaster risk reduction, developed to support the implementation of this policy. Taken together, these initiatives will ultimately result in a more cost-effective and sustainable set of programme activities being implemented by WFP.

CONCLUSIONS

65. At the centre of WFP's concern are the most food- and nutritionally insecure and most 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.
66. 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.
67. 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.

ACRONYMS USED IN THIS DOCUMENT

DFID	Department for International Development
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
HERR	Humanitarian Emergency Response Review
HEWSweb	Humanitarian Early Warning Service
HFA	Hyogo Framework for Action
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ISDR	International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
KPAP	Karamoja Productive Assets Programme
NGO	non-governmental organization
PSNP	Productive Safety Net Programme
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNISDR	Inter-Agency Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
WMO	World Meteorological Organization