**Developing an Agriculture sector Action Plan to implement the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction in Asia (AgriSendai ASAP)**

**Discussion paper**

1. This paper provides background to the development of an Agriculture Sector Action Plan to implement the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction in Asia (hereafter AgriSendai ASAP) and presents, for seeking inputs and consultations, initial ideas on the scoping and outline of the AgriSendai ASAP.
2. The paper draws on the deliberations at the Regional Conference titled “*Strengthening Resilient Food and Agriculture Systems – Implementing the Sendai Framework for DRR in the Agriculture Sector in Asia-Pacific*”, organized by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD), Government of Viet Nam and the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Light Industries (MoFALI), Government of Mongolia in March 2018 in Hanoi, Viet Nam. The Conference reviewed impacts of disasters on food security and agriculture, took stock of progress in managing disaster risks in all agricultural sub-sectors (crop, livestock, fisheries-aquaculture and forestry), and identified priorities for actions to accelerate risk reduction and resilience building. It called for the development of the AgriSendai ASAP to support the implementation of these priorities for actions[[1]](#footnote-1).
3. The paper also builds on FAO’s knowledge and experience in supporting Asian countries manage disaster risks and adapt to climate change in the agriculture sector to ensure food security and enhance resilience of agricultural dependent livelihoods.

**Background**

1. Agriculture, on which 2.2 billion people in Asia depend mainly for their livelihoods, is facing increasing disaster risks. Between 2005 and 2015, natural hazard induced disasters such as flood, drought, and typhoon caused USD 48 billion economic loss alone in crop and livestock production of developing and mid-level income countries in Asia. . Drought accounted for 83 percent of this loss. Much less is known about damage and loss due to pests, animal diseases as well as conflicts. Climate change will intensify these risks. In developing countries, agriculture accounts for 23 percent of total disaster loss but 26 percent of losses caused by climate related disasters.
2. Beyond direct loss, disasters have long lasting impacts because of the way they reduce income, deplete savings, erode livelihoods, and exacerbate the risk of food insecurity and malnutrition, particularly for vulnerable women and children. Disasters disproportionately affect the vulnerable and smallholders, pushing them into vicious debt cycles, negative coping strategies and poverty.
3. The agriculture sector plays an instrumental role in achieving a number of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – end poverty, zero hunger, resilient communities, climate actions, sustainable life below water and life on land. Unless disaster loss trend is reverted and agriculture and its dependent livelihoods become more resilient, these SDGs are at risk to be achieved.
4. Recognizing this and learning from decades of efforts to cope with disasters, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030[[2]](#footnote-2) (SFDRR) calls to make disaster risk management integral to development by all sectors and segments of the society in order to achieve sustainable development.
5. For the first time, disaster risk reduction (DRR), climate change adaptation (CCA) and resilience building are coherently addressed in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: the SFDRR targets are integrated in the SDGs; agriculture and DRR feature prominently in the 32 National Determined Contributions (NDC) to the Paris Agreement from Asia and the Pacific region. Unique opportunity exists for the agriculture sector to accelerate actions to enhance its resilience while playing a more prominent role in implementing these global frameworks.
6. Challenges exist. There is not yet a good understanding of multiple evolving risks faced by the sector, driven by a combination of complex factors - degradation of natural resources, changing consumption patterns, transboundary pests and animal diseases, urbanization, youth out-migration and climate change, amongst others. While most agriculture development strategies/plans highlight the challenges of disaster and climate change, not many have translated these into actions and investments to reduce risks and strengthen resilience. Agriculture sector DRM and CCA strategy/action plan has been developed in some countries, mostly with FAO technical assistance. Assigning DRM responsibilities within the ministry of agriculture is gradually emerging. DRM and CCA actions are scattered across sub-sectors and although improving, effective advisory services and tailor made early warning for farmers, fishermen and herders are yet to be in place to help them reduce risks and prepare better and timely for disasters.
7. Deliberations at the Hanoi Conference and identified priorities for actions point to the need for guidance, tools/standards and concerted actions across sub-sectors to support accelerated progress at the national and local levels. Many of these tools and their applications would benefit from regional collaboration that would consolidate and harmonize existing tools, develop innovative solutions, facilitate peer learning and transfer of technologies among countries.
8. Transboundary risks (such as pest and animal diseases or flood and drought in transboundary river basins) were highlighted at the Hanoi Conference as critical for the agriculture sectors. Deliberations emphasized the need for sharing data, information and collaborative actions by countries in managing these risks. The important role of Inter-governmental organizations (IGO), UN agencies, development partners, academia, NGOs as well as the private sector to support this process was also highlighted.

1. As such, the AgriSendai ASAP, called for at the Hanoi Conference, should complement and support, not replace national action plans, which are emerging in Asian countries. Given the different levels of awareness, political commitments and capacities of agriculture sector across countries in the region, this plan could (i) Enable collaborative actions at regional and sub-regional levels to develop tools, standards, best practices and to address transboundary risks; and (ii) Provide guidance on strategic priorities to be addressed at the national and local levels.
2. Such a plan would assist the Ministries of Agriculture, other concerned ministries and stakeholders to develop robust national policies and programmes that address transboundary risks, strengthen evidence-based planning, making the case for investing in DRR and CCA and enable effective policy implementation while learning from and working in partnership with other countries and partners.

**Objectives of the AgriSendai ASAP**

1. On this background, the objectives of the AgriSendai ASAP could be:

* To identify and facilitate the implementation of strategic priorities at the regional/sub-regional level with a focus on transboundary risks and threats e complementing actions and capacity building at the national and local levels;
* To provide a guidance on strategic priorities to be addressed at the national and local levels for the agriculture sector to implement the SFDRR in Asia; and
* To promote sharing of knowledge, peer learning, regional cooperation and partnerships to support the agriculture sector’s coherent implementation of SFDRR, Paris Agreement and the SDGs in the region.

**Key Stakeholders**

1. Key stakeholders in the development and implementation of the AgriSendai ASAP would be:

* Ministries of Agriculture (viz. crop, livestock, fisheries-aquaculture, and forestry) who would (i) refer to the AgriSendai ASAP for guidance on and integration of strategic priorities that need to be addressed by the agriculture sector both nationally/sub-nationally and regionally; (ii) contribute to its implementation by participating in regional collaborative activities to share information, knowledge, develop tools and standards and jointly address regional and transboundary risks to food and agriculture
* Other concerned ministries (disaster risk management, climate change, poverty reduction and others) that have a mandate for and/or interest in resilience of agriculture and dependent livelihoods, especially of the poor and vulnerable smallholder farmers for a better understanding of the agriculture sectors’ priorities and more coordinated actions.
* Inter-governmental organizations (IGO), UN agencies, development partners, academia, NGOs as well as the private sector, who would work together to identify and implement regional level strategic actions to support actions and capacity building at the national and local levels.
* Other stakeholders, both within and outside the region, who has an interest in resilient food and agriculture systems in Asia and are willing to contribute to the implementation of this plan.

**Scope of the AgriSendai ASAP**

1. The AgriSendai ASAP will address main risks to food and agriculture systems including: (i) natural hazard induced disasters, 80 percent of those are climate related; (ii) food chain crisis such as pest, plant and animal diseases and (iii) protracted crisis and potential overlay between them.
2. The AgriSendai ASAP could have the timeframe of 2019-2022, which would allow its review of progress and reporting at the 2020 Asian Ministerial Conference for DRR (AMCDRR) and update by the 2022 AMCDRR.
3. In line with the objectives, the AgriSendai ASAP would have two parts: (i) Regional strategic priorities to be implemented to complement and support national and local actions and (ii) Guidance for strategic priorities for action at the national and local levels. .
4. At the regional level, the process of developing the AgriSendai ASAP would facilitate the identification of a few regional/sub-regional strategic priorities that regional partners (IGOs, UN, development partners, NGOs, academia and the private sector) will implement collaboratively and in partnership with countries and in-country stakeholders. Possible regional strategic priorities could include:

* Developing vulnerability and risk assessment tools, standards and guidelines for sub-sectors especially where these are lacking i.e. fisheries-aquaculture, livestock and forestry;
* Building national capacity to strengthen agriculture damage and loss information management, as part of overall disaster damage and loss, for SFDRR monitoring and reporting as well as for assessing future risks to agriculture;
* Documentation and sharing technologies, good practices and lessons learned;
* Promoting regional collaborative frameworks for data, information sharing and joint management of transboundary risks (e.g. locust and animal health diseases, DRR tools for transboundary river basin management, drought preparedness and contingency planning, etc.)

1. The priorities for action, identified at the Hanoi conference in line with the SFDRR, supplemented by a more detailed analysis of progress and common challenges faced by countries, will help define and provide guidance on priorities for action at the national and local levels. Examples of such priorities could include:

* Improve the understanding of risks of natural hazards, food chain crises and protracted crises to food and agriculture systems and dependent livelihoods, especially their changing and cascading nature and intensification, driven by climate change and development factors. This includes strengthening agriculture disaster damage and loss data management systems with a focus on fisheries, aquaculture and forestry which are under-accounted for disaster loss;
* Strengthen agriculture sectors’ institutional arrangements, particularly existing institutions at the local level such as: extension services, farmer groups, FFS and cooperatives, to deliver comprehensive DRR and risk-informed development;
* Mobilize higher investments including designing innovative financial instruments for ex-ante risk reduction as well as financing the management of residual risks, particularly of slow onset drought, which remains the highest contributor to agriculture disaster losses;
* Maximize science and technology advancements including in early warning for resilience building in agriculture sectors, reaching the ‘last mile’. Develop guidelines for risk informed recovery planning in the agriculture sub-sectors.

**Linkage with other regional and sub-regional frameworks**

1. The AgriSendai ASAP will contribute to the Asia Regional Plan for Implementation of the Sendai Framework[[3]](#footnote-3) that was adopted at the 2016 Asian Ministerial Conference on DRR (AMCDRR). This plan seeks to provide (i) broad policy direction to guide the implementation of the Sendai Framework in the context of the 2030 sustainable development agendas in the region; (ii) a long-term road map, spanning the 15-year horizon of the Sendai Framework outlining a chronological pathway for implementation of priorities to achieve seven global targets; and (ii) a two-year action plan with specific activities that are prioritised based on the long-term road map and in line with the policy direction. The two-year action plan is updated at biennial AMCDRR.
2. The AgriSendai ASAP will complement sub-regional frameworks on DRR and food and agriculture as well as related frameworks such as:

* The ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) and its five year work programme[[4]](#footnote-4),
* The New Vision and Strategic Plan of Action on ASEAN Cooperation in Food, Agriculture and Forestry 2016-2025[[5]](#footnote-5), the ASEAN Plus Three Cooperation Strategy on Food, Agriculture and Forestry[[6]](#footnote-6) and the ASEAN Integrated Food Security Framework and Strategic Action Plan on Food Security[[7]](#footnote-7).
* The SAARC Agriculture Centre vision and programme[[8]](#footnote-8) and SAARC Disaster Management Roadmap and Framework[[9]](#footnote-9)
* The Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) Regional Framework for DRR[[10]](#footnote-10)

**Possible outline of the AgriSendai ASAP**

1. The following outline could be considered:

* Introduction
  + Risk profile of the agriculture sector in Asia-Pacific
  + The need for agriculture DRR and CCA
  + Agriculture DRR and CCA in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
  + Progress and challenges
  + The need for an AgriSendai ASAP
* Objectives and target audience of the AgriSendai ASAP
* Scope of the AgriSendai ASAP
* Guiding principles
  + The guiding principles would be in line with guiding principles of the SFDRR tailored to specific context of the agriculture sector and vulnerability of smallholder farmers.
* Implementing the SFDRR in Agriculture Sector in Asia-Pacific - Long-term strategies
  + This chapter would provide an overview of how the agriculture sector could contribute to the SFDRR as well as NDC targets.
  + It could also align with the milestones by 2030 set out in the Asia Implementation Plan of the SFDRR.
* Strategic priorities for action at national and local levels 2019-2022
* Regional strategic priorities for action 2019-2022
* Implementation arrangements
* Monitoring and Reporting

**Process to develop and build ownership of the AgriSendai ASAP**

1. This discussion paper will serve as input for initial consultations, utilizing FAO meetings and workshops, to define the above core elements of the AgriSendai ASAP – objectives, scope, guiding principles, long term vision as well as medium (4 years) strategic priorities for actions.
2. Based on these initial consultations, FAO will prepare draft of the AgriSendai ASAP for further consultations. In addition to FAO-organized consultations, opportunities will be explored to piggy-bank on existing regional and sub-regional mechanisms and meetings such as:

* Regional commissions of agriculture sub-sectors i.e. the Asia-Pacific Regional Commission on forestry and the Asia-Pacific Regional Commission on Fisheries.
* The ISDR Asia Partnership meetings.
* The ESCAP DRR Committee and Technical Working Group meetings.
* Meetings on the ASEAN Disaster Management Committee (ACDM), ASEAN Senior Official Meeting on Agriculture and Forestry (SOM AMAF);
* SAARC related meetings.

1. Ministries of Agriculture from countries in the region will drive the process with FAO RAP providing technical and secretariat support while mobilizing engagement of regional partners. At initial consultations, opportunities will be explored for the establishment of a steering committee to guide the process of the development, adoption and implementation of the AgriSendai ASAP. The steering committee would comprise of senior agriculture officials from countries, which champion the issue of DRM and CCA in the agriculture sector in ASEAN, SAARC, ECO, selected champions from National Disaster Management Agencies and relevant regional organizations.
2. It is expected that the AgriSendai ASAP will be endorsed by the Ministries of Agriculture from Asian member countries of FAO.

1. See draft report of the Regional Conference at this link [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://www.preventionweb.net/files/43291_sendaiframeworkfordrren.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <https://www.preventionweb.net/go/50922> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. [www.asean.org/storage/2016/02/AADMER-Work-Programme-2016-2020-v1.6.pdf](http://www.asean.org/storage/2016/02/AADMER-Work-Programme-2016-2020-v1.6.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. <https://cil.nus.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/formidable/18/2016-2025-Vision-and-Stgc-Plan-ASEAN-Coop-in-Food-Agri-Forestry.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. <http://asean.org/storage/2012/05/22.-APTCS-2016-2025.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. <http://www.asean.org/wp-content/uploads/images/Community/AEC/AMAF/OtherDocuments/AIFS%20FRAMEWORK%20SPA%20(2015-2020-Endorsed).pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. <http://www.sac.org.bd/programs/programs-2018/> [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. <http://www.saarc-sdmc.org/saarc-dm-framework> [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. <http://www.eco.int/general_content/85976-ECO-and-Disaster-Risk-Reduction.html?t=General-content> [↑](#footnote-ref-10)