



Special Topic

UN Conference on Sustainable Development – Rio+20



Known as Rio+20, the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development will take place in Brazil on 20-22 June 2012 to mark the 20th anniversary of the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, also

known as the Earth Summit. The Conference will bring together the world leaders, along with thousands of participants from governments, the private sector, NGOs and other groups, to shape how we can reduce poverty, advance social equity and ensure environmental protection on an ever more crowded planet to get to the future we want.

Rio+20 will focus on two themes: (a) a green economy in the context of sustainable development poverty eradication; and (b) the institutional framework for sustainable development. Furthermore, the preparations for Rio+20 have highlighted seven areas which need priority attention. Among others, drought will be addressed particularly in the issue areas of:

- Water: Drought is considered as the key contributing factor to water scarcity, poor water quality and inadequate sanitation especially in the world's poorest countries, worsening hunger and malnutrition; and
- Disasters: Disastrous conditions caused by a quickening pace of droughts and other natural hazards can have devastating impacts on people, environments and economics.

In preparation of the Conference, the Secretariat of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), one of the three Rio Conventions, also prepared a policy brief, "A Sustainable Development Goal for Rio+20: Zero Net Land Degradation." The brief provides a snapshot of the state of the world's land, explains causes and impacts of land degradation and desertification and calls the leaders gathering at the RIO+20 to agree a sustainable goal on land, which is underlined by three targets: zero net land degradation by 2030, zero net forest degradation by 2030 and drought preparedness policies implemented in all drought-prone countries by 2020. The full policy brief is available for download at http://www.unccd.int/Lists/SiteDocumentLibrary/Rio+20/UNCCD_PolicyBrief_ZeroNetLandDegradation.pdf.

Please visit <http://www.uncsd2012.org/rio20/index.html> for more information regarding the Rio+20.

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About AADP

Africa-Asia Drought Risk Peer Assistance Network (AADP) is a network established under the *Africa-Asia Drought Risk Management Peer Assistance Project*. The project is designed to mitigate the risks of drought and improve human livelihoods in Africa and Asia by creating an enabling environment for inter-regional knowledge sharing among drought-prone countries and facilitating the up-scaling of proven drought risk management (DRM) practices.

AADP provides the DRM practitioners and policymakers with a variety of peer learning and capacity development support to, based on their priorities, operational gaps and capacity needs, building on the pool of experiences and expertise of the ongoing [African Drought Risk and Development Network initiative \(ADDN\)](#).

The project is funded by the Government of Japan and implemented by the UNDP Drylands Development Centre.

For more information, please visit the [AADP project website](#).

Knowledge Resources and Networking Opportunities

Understanding Risk Network

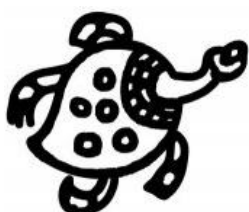


Understanding Risk (UR) is a community of global experts in disaster risk assessment. The 2010 UR Forum seeded a vibrant global community of experts and practitioners in disaster risk assessment, including drought risk assessment. 500 participants attended the Forum, held in Washington D.C, June 1-3, 2010. The vision of UR is to increase the global understanding of risk by supporting a network of experts and practitioners that share knowledge and experience, collaborate and discuss innovation and best practice in disaster risk assessment. UR Community members come from Government, the private sector, multilaterals, NGOs, academia and community organisations.

There are currently some 2,400 Online Community members from over 100 countries. The objective of UR Online Community site is to provide a permanent space where the community can share ideas and collaborate. At present, the site is being developed to transform it from a platform that supported a conference, to a vibrant 365 day a year community. Incentives, such as allowing members to showcase risk assessment projects and map those projects, are being built into the site to encourage participation and further engagement. Please visit <http://www.understandrisk.org/ur/> for further information on the UR and its Online Community site.

The “State-of-the-Union” of the UR Community is the UR Forum, which is held every two years. The next UR Forum will take place in South Africa in 2012. More information on the UR 2012 Forum is available in the Event and Training Opportunities below.

Southasiadisasters.net



All India Disaster Mitigation Institute (AIDMI), Gujarat, is India's leading community based action research, action planning and action advocacy organisation. Since 1989 it works towards bridging the gap between policy, practice and research related to disaster mitigation. It makes strategic efforts to link the local community with the national and international level humanitarian activities.

Since 2005, AIDMI has been publishing the newsletter, entitled Southasiadisasters.net, on a monthly basis to keep disaster managers and communities updated on useful information about disaster preparedness in South Asia and beyond in a concise format. The main topic of the 83rd (March 2012) issue of the newsletter is “microinsurance for disaster risk reduction: post-disaster recovery of poor”. The articles, contributed by experts and practitioners from DRR and insurance field, include: joint efforts for mitigating economic loss; financing risk reduction and recovery before disaster strikes; rainfall insurance: a case of Self Employed Women's Association for converting challenge into opportunity, among others. For more information, please visit http://www.preventionweb.net/files/26379_26379sadnetmicroinsurance1.pdf.

All the past issues of the Southasiadisasters.net newsletter are also available for download at <http://www.aidmi.org/publications.asp>.

Seasonal Climate Forecasts by the International Research Institute for Climate and Society



The International Research Institute for Climate and Society (IRI) was established based on a cooperative agreement between the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Climate Program Office and Columbia University as part of the Earth Institute, Columbia University. It aims to contribute to sustainable living and poverty reduction, through the integration of climate information into management strategies for climate-sensitive sectors such as agriculture, food security, water resources and health.

At the height of 1997's very strong El Nino episode, IRI's prediction division began generating seasonal climate forecasts on a real-time basis, using an extensive suite of forecasting tools. IRI's Interactive Net Assessment site provides a range of current climate prediction information, including global/regional probability forecasts for seasonal temperature and precipitation, the predictions of the individual tools that contribute to the final forecasts and forecasts of the sea surface temperature. Additionally, more specialized products include a dynamical model-based forecast of tropical cyclone activity in several ocean basins, a merging of the climate forecasts with recently observed climate events, and a product that provides probabilities for more detailed, user-defined precipitation outcomes for selected locations. Most of IRI forecasts are issued near the middle of each month (on the third Thursday of the month), and extend to the next 6 months into the future.

The most recent and past IRI Seasonal Climate Forecasts can be viewed at <http://portal.iri.columbia.edu/portal/server.pt?open=512&objID=944&PageID=7868&mode=2>.

Africa Human Development Report 2012: Towards a Food Secure Future

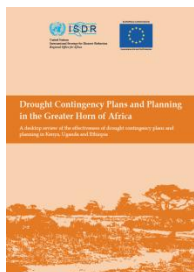


More than one in four Africans - close to 218 million people - is undernourished. Nevertheless, African governments spend between 5-10% of their budgets on agriculture, well below the 20% average that Asian governments devoted to the sector during the green revolution there. *The 2012 Human Development Report for Africa* explores why dehumanizing hunger remains pervasive in the sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) region, despite abundant agricultural resources, a favourable growing climate, and rapid economic growth rates.

From field to table the supply of food in sub-Saharan Africa is fraught with risk. Shocks, cycles and trends threaten food security and livelihoods. Conflict, droughts, floods, food price spikes and other shocks inflict immediate hardship on the poorest and most vulnerable households and constrain future human development. And too often the damage is permanent. Preventing or relieving stresses before they undermine food systems requires action across multiple fronts. To boost food security, the Report argues for action in four interrelated areas: agricultural productivity, nutrition, access to food, and empowerment of the rural poor. It asserts that increasing agricultural productivity in sustainable ways can bolster food production and economic opportunities, thereby improving food availability and increasing purchasing power. Effective nutrition policies can create conditions for the proper use and absorption of calories and nutrients. Finally, empowering the rural poor – especially women – and harnessing the power of information, innovation, and markets can promote equitable allocation of food and resources within families and across communities.

The full report and the summary are both available for download at <http://www.afhdr.org/the-report/>.

Drought Contingency Plans and Planning in the Greater Horn of Africa: A Desktop Review of the Effectiveness of Drought Contingency Plans and Planning in Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia



This paper is a contribution of the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction towards effective Drought Contingency Planning for stakeholders and partners implementing drought risk reduction programmes in the Greater Horn of Africa. Based on the practice, observations and evidence collected from the communities and implementing agencies presented in various reports and publications, the study attempts to convert findings, concepts and guidelines into a guidance document from critical gaps to bridge general drought preparedness, contingency planning and early response.

Although “Drought Contingency Plan” and “Drought Contingency Planning” are used interchangeably, they are not identical. With respect to this review, a few conceptual and operational definitions of terms and concepts related to drought are highlighted. Whereas the contingency planning process, guidelines and evaluation have been studied at the national government and inter-agency levels, there has been little research and examination on the critical gaps in contingency plans and planning for implementing partners for effective drought preparedness and response at community levels. In an attempt to bridge the gap in the drought contingency planning process and content, the author proposes a framework and steps for combined considerations and a proposed contingency planning model. A continuum model was also proposed as a dynamic and participatory contingency planning and funding process that will work for the Greater Horn of Africa. It is anticipated that the contributions from this study will also be useful for other regions in Africa and the world in drought risk management.

The full paper is available for download at http://www.preventionweb.net/files/26436_droughtcontingencylow.pdf.

Event and Training Opportunities

The 20th International Conference on Geoinformatics - GeoInformatics 2012 (Hong Kong, China; June 15-17, 2012)



The Geoinformatics conference series was initiated by the International Association of Chinese Professionals in Geographic Information Sciences (GIS) in 1992. This annual international conference has provided a unique forum for exchanging ideas and knowledge on geoinformation sciences between GIS professionals

worldwide. The 20th International Conference on Geoinformatics (GeoInformatics 2012) will be held on 15-17 June, 2012, at Hong Kong SAR, China. The conference is co-organized by Institute of Space and Earth Information Science, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, National Remote Sensing Center of China and the International Association of Chinese Professionals in Geographic Information Sciences.

In response to the increasing concerns on global changes and natural disasters, the theme of the GeoInformatics 2012 is

"Global Change, Adaptation and Risk Management". Droughts, floods, earthquakes, pollutions and many other natural and man-made disasters are severe threats to the mankind. Geoinformatic technologies shall play essential roles to mitigate damages of the disasters. This conference will provide an excellent opportunity for professionals and students in the geographic information science area to exchange innovative ideas, discover cutting-edge technologies, and present inspiring applications.

Please visit <http://www.iseis.cuhk.edu.hk/Geoinformatics2012/Home.html> for more information regarding the Geoinformatics 2012.

The 2nd Understanding Risk Forum (Cape Town, South Africa; July 2-6, 2012)



The global Understanding Risk Forums are held every two years to discuss cutting-edge methodologies and innovative applications, as well as cost-effective tools in risk analysis that can significantly enhance the decision-making process to mainstream disaster risk reduction. The 2nd UR Forum (UR2012) will be held in

Cape Town, South Africa, from July 2-6, 2012, bringing together thought leaders and decision-makers to share knowledge in a "state-of-world" conference on natural disaster risk assessment. The theme for the UR2012 is "mapping global risk", which will highlight the essential role that data on hazard, exposure and vulnerability plays in understanding

risk. A special focus will be placed on Africa. Extreme weather events such as the recent droughts in the Horn of Africa and the Sahel, coupled with the continent's rapid urbanization reveal how vulnerable Africa remains to disasters.

Twelve technical conference panel sessions will showcase new ideas and critical elements in disaster risk assessment, including drought and flood risk, open data risk financing and insurance, community-based assessment and crowd sourcing among others. The forum will also provide an innovation expo, a Mayors' Roundtable on Urban Risk, a series of side community-of-practice side meetings, and training sessions in emerging tools in risk assessment.

For more information on UR2012, please visit <https://www.understandrisk.org/ur/page/ur-2012> or view the event brochure at http://www.gfdrr.org/gfdrr/sites/gfdrr.org/files/UR_2012.pdf.

International Conference on Managing Soils for Food Security and Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation (Vienna, Austria; July 23-27, 2012)



Agriculture is important for food security in two ways: it produces the food people eat; and it provides the primary source of livelihood for 36% of the world's total workforce. In the heavily populated countries of Asia and the Pacific, this share ranges from 40-50% and in sub-Saharan Africa, 67% of the working population still make their living from agriculture. Climate change can impact directly on food security through food system stability. Agriculture can adapt to the change by adopting farm management practices that minimise the adverse effects of increasing

or decreasing rainfall and temperatures or other extreme weather conditions, i.e. heat and/or drought stress. The focus of the International Conference on Managing Soils for Food Security and Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation is to highlight the importance of soil management in enhancing food security within the context of climate change.

Significant advances have been made in recent years in our understanding of soil carbon sequestration, soil nutrient transformation as influenced by different fertilizers and cropping-land use systems, and soil water storage and movement in agro-ecosystems. The objective of this International Symposium is to communicate these exciting scientific and technological developments, to identify current gaps in knowledge and to discuss ways in which soils can be better managed to meet the challenge of protecting food security through the dual approach of climate change adaptation and mitigation.

For further details on the International Conference on Managing Soils for Food Security and Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation, please visit <http://www-pub.iaea.org/iaea meetings/41176/International-Conference-on-Managing-Soils-for-Food-Security-and-Climate-Change-Adaptation-and-Mitigation> or view the flyer at http://www-pub.iaea.org/MTCD/Meetings/PDFplus/2012/cn191/cn191_flyer.pdf.

Employment and Grant Opportunities

Chief of Party – African Development Solutions (Closing Date: Open until Filled)



African Development Solutions (Adeso), formerly known as Horn Relief, is an expanding and vibrant African-based international non-profit organization, working with communities to strengthen rural livelihood and deliver innovative humanitarian aid and development programs. Adeso seeks to fill the Chief of Party position for an anticipated USAID funded project in Kenya.

The purpose of this position is to support the overall strategic leadership and oversight of the project. The project aims to reduce hunger and poverty, increase social stability and build strong foundations for economic growth by strengthening social, economic, and environmental resilience in pastoral and transitioning communities in Kenya's arid lands. Based in Nairobi, the Chief of Party will be primarily responsible for overall strategic leadership and oversight to the project. S/he will ensure timely and efficient delivery of project's results. S/he will be responsible for coordinating partners, project planning and review, stakeholder engagement, financial and people management, and donor reporting. In particular, s/he is expected to supervise and provide strategic and technical guidance to project technical staff in a range of livelihood, value chain, natural resource management, drought disaster reduction, conflict management, and nutrition interventions, ensure synchrony and collaboration between technical staff from the various partner organizations and work with them to bring ideas, findings, and lessons learned to project leadership and the donor agency.

For further details of the position as well as the application process, please visit http://adesoafrica.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/Vacancy-Announcement_Chief-of-Party_Final.pdf.

Disaster Risk Management Law Advisor – Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority (Closing Date: June 2, 2012)



Afghanistan is a landlocked country with mostly dry climate characterized by extremes of cold winters and hot summers. Nature's destructive patterns routinely affect and wreak havoc in the country. In the last ten years Afghanistan has also been suffering a prolonged drought, which affects over 6 million Afghans mainly in the southern and eastern regions. Other common hazards include earthquakes, flood and mudslides, agricultural pests, such as caterpillars and locusts, and dust and sandstorms.

Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA) is looking for a dynamic and result oriented Disaster Risk Management Law Advisor to review the existing Laws/Acts related to disaster risk management (DRM) and draft new Laws/Acts on DRM as per the need of the country. More specifically, under the supervision of the Director General, ANDMA, the Disaster Risk Management Law Advisor will review status of procedures for disaster/emergency response and preparedness and related materials of the country and countries from the region and conduct consultations and dialogues with key actors for drafting a pragmatic disaster management policy and institutional mechanism that will allow to mainstream DRR into development in Afghanistan.

For further details of the position as well as the application process, please visit http://www.ctapafghanistan.org/jobs/366/afghanistan/Kabul/Afghanistan_National_Disaster_Management_Authority_%28ANDMA%29/Disaster_Risk_Management_Law_Advisor.html.

Regional Water Sanitation and Hygiene Coordinator – Oxfam GB (Closing Date: June 4, 2012)



Asia is home to more than 40% of the world's income poor. Asia is also one of the most disaster prone areas of the world. Droughts, floods, cyclones, and earthquakes affect hundreds of millions of people each year. The frequency and intensity of weather related disasters is likely to increase with climate change, decreasing agricultural yield and productivity. Conflict related crises are also prevalent in parts of the region. Together, these disasters have put an even greater strain on the health and livelihood of an already vulnerable population.

Based in any of the country offices in the Asia region, namely Cambodia, Indonesia, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam, Nepal, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, Regional Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Coordinator will support the development and delivery of country specific WASH strategies and programmes which involves humanitarian preparedness and response, disaster risk reduction, development, and campaigning. The key function of the position is to provide technical support, distant mentoring and coaching to assess and build WASH capacity of Oxfam and partner staff in each of these countries, helping them bridge the gap between their current programmes and the positive impact everyone at Oxfam aspires to. While a part of the Oxfam Regional Centre in Bangkok, this post will be based in one of Asia country offices.

More information on the position and the application procedure is available at http://www.i-gasp.com/fe/tpl_oxfam.asp?newms=jj&id=38168.



Drought Risk Management: Practitioner's Perspectives from Africa and Asia (2012)

This report reviewed the current institutional and programmatic landscape in the realm of drought risk management (DRM) in the two regions and mapped out some of the main DRM capacity gaps and gap-filling opportunities. The exercise is based upon the consultations with key individuals in both continents, an online survey of some 400 practitioners working in drought-related fields and focused discussions at the First Africa-Asia Drought Adaptation Forum held in Bangkok, Thailand, in June 2011. It highlighted important similarities in DRM issues across Africa and Asia and identified priority areas to which the inter-regional south-south cooperation could add value.

The full publication and the issue brief are both available for download at:

http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/environment-energy/sustainable_land_management/drought-risk-management-from-africa-and-asia.html.



Mainstreaming Drought Risk Management: A Primer / Intégration de la Gestion du Risqué de Sécheresse: Manuel introductif (2011)

The overall purpose of this Primer is to provide a basic roadmap for mainstreaming drought risk reduction concepts and practices into development planning and programming at different levels. It outlines a stepwise approach to define the drought risks within a given context. It also presents a methodology for translating the risk assessments and metrics into specific policy measures, planning instruments and measurable interventions.

The full publication is available for download at:

<http://www.undp.org/drylands/docs/Mainstreaming%20DRM-English.pdf> (English)

<http://www.undp.org/drylands/docs/Mainstreaming%20DRM-French.pdf> (French)

Useful Links on Drought Status Updates

Africa

African Centre of Meteorological Application for Development: <http://www.acmad.ne/index.htm>

Experimental African Drought Monitor: http://hydrology.princeton.edu/~justin/research/project_global_monitor/

Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET) Africa: <http://www.fews.net/Pages/default.aspx>

Food Security & Nutrition Working Group Update: <http://www.disasterriskreduction.net/east-central-africa/fsnwg/drought>

IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre (ICPAC): <http://www.icpac.net/Forecasts/forecasts.html>

Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN) Africa: <http://www.irinnews.org/IRIN-Africa.aspx>

Prevention Web Africa: <http://www.preventionweb.net/english/countries/africa/>

Relief Web Africa: <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/dbc.nsf/doc115?OpenForm&rc=1>

Southern African Development Community (SADC) Climate Service Centre: <http://www.sadc.int/english/regional-integration/is/csc/>

UNOCHA (Southern & East Africa): <http://ochaonline.un.org/rosea/LatestUpdates/tabid/6652/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

UNOCHA (West & Central Africa): <http://ochaonline.un.org/Bulletinshumanitaires/tabid/3099/language/fr-FR/Default.aspx>

Asia

Asian Disaster Reduction Center: <http://www.adrc.asia/latest/index.php>

East Asian Drought Monitoring System: <http://atmos.pknu.ac.kr/~intra2>

FEWS NET Central Asia: <http://www.fews.net/Pages/default.aspx>

IRIN Asia: <http://www.irinnews.org/IRIN-Asia.aspx>

Pacific Disaster Center/World Natural Hazards Website: <http://www.pdc.org/iweb/pdchome.html>

Prevention Web Asia: <http://www.preventionweb.net/english/countries/asia/>

Relief Web Asia: <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/dbc.nsf/doc115?OpenForm&rc=3>

SAARC South Asian Disaster Knowledge Network Weekly Disaster News: <http://www.saarc-sadkn.org/about.aspx>