



**High Level Meeting on National Drought Policy (HMNDP)  
CICG, Geneva  
11-15 March 2013**

**Policy Document: National Drought Management Policy**

**United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)**

**Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)**

**World Meteorological Organization (WMO)**

**February 2012**

## **Policy Document**

### **National Drought Management Policy**

Acknowledging that droughts have caused human suffering since the beginning of man-kind;

Noting that drought is a scourge that is still with us as demonstrated by the drought in the Horn of Africa (2011) and in the Sahel (2012);

Further noting that drought has major implications in terms of human lives lost and, increasingly, in terms of short term and long term economic losses;

Also noting that climate change is likely to shift the patterns of droughts and possibly increase the frequency and severity of extreme events thus further increasing risk of human and economic losses;

Reminding that recent research demonstrates that droughts increase the likelihood of communal violence, civil wars or even wars between nations;

Considering that these costs in human suffering is largely preventable through appropriate policies;

This document sets out to outline the goals and essential elements of national drought management policies (NDMPs)

It is to be noted that such NDMPs would complement other national and international policies such as: UNCCD National Action Plans, Disaster Risk and Reduction Management policies, National Climate Change Adaptation policies and plans as well as Integrated Soil and Water Conservation Management practices, policies and plans and in doing so would enhance food security, reduce the vulnerability of the poorer sections of society and promote growth.

#### **Goals for a National Drought Management Policy (NDMP)**

The Overarching theme for NDMP is “Promoting national drought policies to reduce societal vulnerability to droughts”

NDMP should establish a clear set of principles or operating guidelines to govern the management of drought and its impacts. The policy should be consistent and equitable for all regions, population groups, and economic sectors and consistent with the goals of sustainable development.

National Drought Management Policy could be centered around five goals:

1) Proactive mitigation and planning measures, risk management, public outreach and resource stewardship as key elements of effective national drought policy.

2) Greater collaboration to enhance the national/regional/global observation network and information delivery system to improve public understanding of and preparedness for drought.

3) Incorporation of comprehensive governmental and private insurance and financial strategies into drought preparedness plans.

4) Recognition of a safety net of emergency relief based on sound stewardship of natural resources and self-help at diverse governance levels.

5) Link to drought programs and other related policies and response in an effective, efficient and customer-oriented manner.

**Essential elements of the NDMP include the following:**

**a) Promoting Standard Approaches to Vulnerability and Impact Assessment**

- Understand the natural processes and human activities that contribute to vulnerability and community resilience and how these will be integrated to inform risk reduction and management.
  - Address the gaps in knowledge, methodologies and types of information that are preventing the effective application of these methodologies. A key goal is the enablement of affected populations.
  - Work with communities facing hazards to manage their own environments more responsibly and equitably over the long term by joining in a global structure that supports informed, responsible, systematic actions to improve local conditions in vulnerable regions.
  - Encourage governments departments and institutions, both public and private, to support, provide incentives, coordinate data and decision support, and legitimize successful approaches to increasing capacity and action
- Characterize drought-related impacts and carry out vulnerability mapping with due consideration to vulnerable groups and communities
- Strengthen cross-sectorial coordination of the assessment of drought vulnerability and impacts and partnerships among state, academia and the private sector for conducting impacts assessments.
- Develop criteria to weigh the importance drought impacts and vulnerability factors, and to identify high-leverage mitigation actions.

**b) Implementing Effective Drought Monitoring and Early Warning Systems**

- Establish and support a comprehensive and effective integrated drought monitoring system at the country level
- Assess the adequacy of networks, in particular, meteorological, hydrological and ecological networks for drought monitoring and data quality.
- Examine the current arrangements and procedures for the collection and analysis of data and assure coordination between many agencies and ministries at the different administrative levels.
- Develop useful end products, information or decision-support tools and ensure their timely delivery to the end users.

- Develop and mainstream effectiveness of Early Warning Information Systems that include warning of potential impacts on livelihoods.
- Systematically monitor and record local drought impacts in real time.
  - Measure and control data quality; and
  - Ensure that drought EWS information systems are designed to reach (and can be used by) local communities.
- Develop adequate linkages between early warning and relief and response.

**c) Enhancing Preparedness and mitigation actions**

- Develop, test and improve methodologies and measure progress in reducing vulnerability and enhancing community capacity—e.g., drought risk management, cost-effectiveness of methodologies and analyses, and societal impacts of catastrophic events.
- Enable affected populations through support from governments and institutions, provision of incentives, and legitimization of successful approaches to increasing capacity and action at the local level.
- Develop mitigation actions at multiple time scales.
  - Use drought impact records to develop probabilistic drought-risk assessments and facilitate proactive planning and drought risk management.
  - Consider the ability of farmers to receive and use information
- Develop drought response measures that reinforce the concept of risk management as a key element of a national drought policy while promoting environmental stewardship.
- Identify incentives that could be provided to vulnerable sectors/groups to enhance the adoption of risk-based management measures in support of a national drought policy.
- Strengthen research efforts to promote sustainable development and increase community resilience to drought

**d) Implementing Emergency response and relief measures that reinforce national drought policy goals**

- Identify emergency measures that will reduce the impact of current drought while reducing vulnerability to future occurrences
- Ensure that the relief reaches affected communities/sectors in a timely fashion
- Link drought relief to preparedness and mitigation actions

### **Through (how)**

- a) Stakeholder identification of risks and mitigation measures
- b) Collection and analyzing information
- c) Evidence – based processes for risks assessment and prioritization of mitigation measures
- d) Identification of institutional bottlenecks and arrangements
- e) Mainstreaming - Systems for linking measures to existing policies and institutions

-----