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**COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN
PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL**

**THE EU APPROACH TO RESILIENCE:
LEARNING FROM FOOD SECURITY CRISES**

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1. THE NEED TO ADDRESS CHRONIC VULNERABILITY

Recent and recurrent food crises in the Sahel region and in the Horn of Africa, where more than 30 million people are suffering from hunger, have underscored the need to work on a long-term and systematic approach to building the resilience of vulnerable countries and populations.

The effects of economic shocks, rising and fluctuating food prices, demographic pressure, climate change, desertification, environmental degradation, pressure on natural resources, inappropriate land tenure systems, insufficient investment in agriculture, have, in many parts of the world, resulted in greater exposure to risk, notably from natural hazards. The impact of these global trends is manifested in the increasing number and intensity of natural disasters and crises. The poorest households are the most vulnerable and in many instances this vulnerability is compounded by political instability and conflict. In the case of food insecurity, despite some progress, one billion people are still suffering from hunger and the issue is particularly acute in drought-prone areas where most of the population depends directly on agriculture and pastoralism.

The EU is one of the world's largest donors providing life-saving assistance to people affected by various crises. Over recent years the demands for such assistance have increased substantially – far outstripping the resources available. Such assistance is vital, but it is aimed mainly at coping with emergency situations and needs to be supplemented by support to populations at risk to withstand, cope with and adapt to repeated adverse events and long-term stress.

Building resilience is a long-term effort that needs to be firmly embedded in national policies and planning. It is a part of the development process, and genuinely sustainable development will need to tackle the root causes of recurrent crises rather than just their consequences. Working with vulnerable populations to build their resilience is also a fundamental part of poverty reduction which is the ultimate aim of EU development policy, as has been reaffirmed by the EU in the Agenda for Change¹.

Resilience strategies should contribute to different policies, in particular Food Security², Climate Change Adaptation³ and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)⁴. In this context, the EU has consistently supported prevention and preparedness for crises in the most vulnerable countries

¹ COM(2011)637, as endorsed by May 14 2012 Council Conclusions

² COM(2010)127 final

³ COM(2009) 147 final. White Paper "Adapting to climate change: Towards a European framework for action

⁴ EU Strategy for supporting disaster risk reduction in developing countries COM (2009) 84 of 23.02.2009. Towards an EU response to situations of fragility: engaging in difficult environments for sustainable development, stability and peace COM (2007) 643 of 25.10.2007.

and identified the need to integrate DRR and Adaptation to Climate Change, notably into both development cooperation and the humanitarian response.

Investing in resilience is cost effective. Addressing the root causes of recurrent crises is not only better, especially for the people concerned, than only responding to the consequences of crises, it is also much cheaper. When the world is experiencing an economic and budgetary downturn, the budgets of both partner countries and donors are coming under increased pressure to show that they deliver the maximum impact for the funds that are made available.

In response to the massive food crises in Africa, the Commission has recently taken two initiatives: Supporting Horn of African Resilience (SHARE)⁵ and "Alliance Globale pour l'Initiative Résilience Sahel" (AGIR)⁶. These set out a new approach to building up the resilience of vulnerable populations.

The purpose of this Communication is to use the lessons from these experiences to improve the effectiveness of the EU's support to reducing vulnerability in developing countries, which are disaster-prone by including resilience as a central aim.

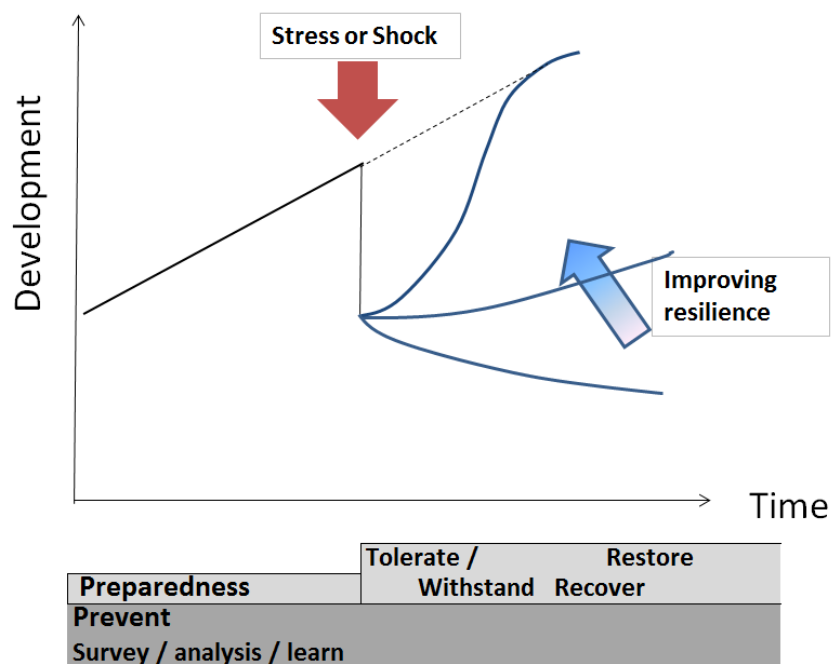
In addition, this Communication aims to contribute to the international debate on enhancing food security and resilience in a wider sense, notably in the context of the G8, G20, the Committee on World Food Security, the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) initiative, Rio Conventions⁷ negotiations and the Global Alliance for the Horn of Africa.

⁵ Commission Staff Working Document SEC (2012) 102 of 11 April 2012.

⁶ Alliance globale pour l'Initiative Résilience (Sahel) –
<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/12/613&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&>

⁷ United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity and United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

2. THE RESILIENCE PARADIGM



Adapted from Montpellier Panel – "Growth with Resilience: Opportunities in African Agriculture", March 2012

Resilience is the ability of an individual, a household, a community, a country or a region to withstand, to adapt, and to quickly recover from stresses and shocks.

The concept of resilience has two dimensions: the inherent strength of an entity – an individual, a household, a community or a larger structure – to better resist stress and shock and the capacity of this entity to bounce back rapidly from the impact.

Increasing resilience (and reducing vulnerability) can therefore be achieved either by enhancing the entity's strength, or by reducing the intensity of the impact, or both. It requires **a multifaceted strategy** and a broad systems perspective aimed at both reducing the multiple risks of a crisis and at the same time improving rapid coping and adaptation mechanisms at local, national and regional level. **Strengthening resilience** lies at the interface of humanitarian and development assistance.

Enhancing resilience calls for a **long-term approach**, based on alleviating the underlying causes conducive to crises, and enhancing capacities to better manage future uncertainty and change.

3. THE EU'S EXPERIENCE IN DEALING WITH RESILIENCE AND FOOD CRISES IN AFRICA

In Sub-Saharan Africa, the poorest households, communities and countries have suffered from a diminished capacity to recover from the long-term effects of climate change, especially frequent and intense droughts, as well as economic crises and internal conflicts. The EU has provided support in relation to food crises in Africa for many years through humanitarian and development assistance. Building on this, the EU Agenda for Change will prioritise cooperation in sustainable agriculture, including the safeguarding of ecosystem services and food and nutrition security in the EU's future long-term development assistance.

In line with a focus on resilience, support to the agricultural sector and related national and regional policies, including land use, should not only strengthen production but ensure notably the better functioning of food markets and support empowerment of vulnerable groups and civil society.

Against this background, the EU is developing and implementing innovative responses to the crises in the Horn of Africa and the Sahel, which should provide valuable lessons for a more systematic and long-term approach to building the resilience of affected populations. It is important here to recognise the role of women in building resilience in households and in communities affected by crises. In unstable and fragile countries, where resilience is often weakest, it is also important to ensure that policy initiatives take into account the security-development nexus, thereby encouraging an approach that can promote policy coherence and complementarity.

3.1. Supporting the Horn of Africa's Resilience (SHARE)

A number of factors underlie the long-standing vulnerability of livelihoods in the Horn of Africa. These include population growth and increased pressure on resources, rural poverty, low productivity, weakened terms-of-trade, insecure access to land and water, weak governance, insecurity and prolonged geo-political instability. The EU has considerable experience in cooperating with development partners in the Horn of Africa on agriculture and

food security and has gained valuable understanding of which approaches hold the greatest potential.

The 2011 drought that hit the region was the worst in 60 years. It constituted a shock that turned a precarious situation into a crisis (and in Somalia it resulted in famine conditions).

Informed by the alerts from the food security early warning systems, the EU and its Member States worked to develop a response that could match the scale of the crisis:

- A joint humanitarian-development analytical framework was elaborated which allowed humanitarian and development actors to work from a common understanding and define joint priorities.
- The EU together provided EUR 790 million in humanitarian assistance in 2011/12. The Commission alone allocated EUR 181 million. In addition to life-saving activities, this assistance also provided for first steps in the recovery process, for instance through the provision of seeds and tools, improved water management, and restocking of herds.
- An increase in short-term development financing was quickly provided to support the immediate recovery phase. The Commission engagement for the period 2012-13 was EUR 250 million to support agricultural and livestock production, nutrition, livestock health, water supply and natural resource management.

In addition to the short-term response, the EU has put in place a long-term and structured approach to assist the affected countries and communities to recover after the drought and build up their ability to cope with future droughts. This involves:

- A commitment to work with and through regional partners. The EU and other bilateral donors, are assisting the secretariat of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) to strengthen its capacity and to coordinate and promote cross-border initiatives in areas such as livestock development and natural resource management.
- A commitment to work closely with other donors active in the region. The donor community has initiated a light coordination platform, the "Global Alliance for Action for Resilience and Growth⁸". Working closely with IGAD, the Global Alliance has provided a forum to bring together country partners and those donors active in supporting drought resilience.

A long-term commitment to address structural issues and to build long-term resilience. Depending on the specific national and local context, several themes and sectors will be treated as priorities for EU funding over the period 2014-2020. These could include: livestock health and development, natural resource management, DRR, national and regional trade, nutrition, governance, research and technology transfer, and population flows.

⁸ The scope of the Alliance covers the greater Horn: Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Somalia, Djibouti as well as Sudan and South Sudan. The Secretariat is provided by USAID.

3.2. AGIR Sahel: the EU Global Alliance for Resilience Initiative (Alliance Globale pour l'Initiative Résilience-Sahel)

Over the past nine agricultural seasons, the Sahel has faced six distinct food crises. The region has suffered from undernutrition with indicators well above alarm levels. Twelve million people are currently at risk which represents 20% of the population. Women and children are the most vulnerable to food and economic stresses, especially during the lean period between harvest cycles.

Progress has been made over the past years in West Africa, thanks to the work of existing institutions and platforms - such as the "*Réseau de Prévention des Crises Alimentaires*" (RPCA) and the "*Comité permanent Inter-Etats de Lutte contre la Sécheresse au Sahel*" (CILSS). Building upon lessons learned approaches have been developed to better face food crises. The improved functioning of early warning systems has helped countries and donors to better anticipate the ongoing crisis.

The EU action plan responding to the 2012 Sahel crisis amounts to approximately EUR 500 million (EUR 123 million for humanitarian response and EUR 372 million for development programmes).

A three-phased approach has been designed in close coordination between EU humanitarian and development assistance. The plan covers a wide range of activities ranging from improving access to food to supporting country partners' early warning systems, market functioning and ecosystem protection. It links emergency and development programmes, mixing short term and medium-to-long term funding towards enhancing resilience in an integrated approach. Addressing emergencies while investing in resilience calls for coordinated assistance efforts - aligned with regional organisations – both to ensure coherence and complementarity and to reduce vulnerability of the poorest households to shocks and to tackle the underlying causes of food and nutrition insecurity.

The "*Alliance Globale pour l'Initiative Résilience*" (AGIR) Partnership, launched by the Commission on 18 June 2012, provides a resilience roadmap building on and reinforcing existing regional strategies - such as the joint regional strategy of the Economic Community of West African State (ECOWAS), the *Union Economique et Monétaire Ouest Africaine* (UEMOA) and the Comité permanent Inter-Etats de Lutte contre la Sécheresse dans le Sahel (CILSS) with the support of the Sahel and West Africa Club (SWAC). A regional Plan of Action to strengthen resilience in a permanent and sustainable way in the Sahel, drawn up by the West African regional organisations with the support of the donor community, will be presented to a high-level meeting of all the states concerned in Ouagadougou in early December 2012.

4. LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE

The SHARE and AGIR initiatives represent an improvement in the way humanitarian and development assistance interact, boosting the levels of assistance in the short-term, facilitating the link between relief, rehabilitation and development (LRRD), as well as demonstrating the commitment of the EU to address the root causes of food insecurity in the longer-term.

They focus on food security in sub-Saharan Africa, but this approach can equally be applied to other regions and other types of vulnerability (for example, regions threatened by floods, cyclones, earthquakes, droughts, storm surges and tsunamis, climate change, or food price

increase). The approach developed has a number of common elements that the EU will look to replicate in the most vulnerable developing countries. There are three key components to this approach, which are further elaborated below:

- Anticipating crises by assessing risks
- Focusing on prevention and preparedness
- Enhancing crisis response

4.1. Anticipating crises by assessing risks

Both in the Horn of Africa and in the Sahel, early warning systems pointed to looming crises. Early warning systems for food security (such as the Integrated Phase Classification approach) have been improved, allowing partner countries and regional institutions to prepare an appropriate response in advance of crises. Similarly, early warning systems for other risks like tsunamis, or for other regions, are also now functioning better.

These Information Systems also need to be interconnected with relevant global initiatives like the Agricultural Market Information System established in the context of the G20.

There also needs to be a more systematic link between the information provided and policy and decision making at national and regional levels. For instance, data such as (child) under-nutrition, agricultural production (including stocks) and markets (including food prices) should better feed into food security and sustainable agriculture policies.

This should be reflected in particular in country-owned policies and processes such as the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP). CAADP investment plans not only address the current constraints but also anticipate future shocks and stresses and assist countries to mitigate, respond to and build resilience.

The regional early warning system (CILSS/ECOWAS/UEMOA): The Food Crisis Prevention Network (RCPA) is a platform where partner countries, donors, UN, and civil society organisations pool information in order to come to a joint analysis of food insecurity in West Africa. It was instrumental in ringing the alarm bells in the early phases of the current 2012 crisis.

In the same vein, the EU established the Global Climate Change Alliance to enhance policy dialogue and cooperation with countries most affected by climate change. Early Warning Information systems and Disaster Management are important elements in this context.

Early Warning Systems in Nepal: In August 2010 flood levels on the Rapt River breached the warning level in Chitwan district. The early warning system along the river, through a radio and telephone network, allowed the Disaster Management Committees of the communities at risk to shift their essential and movable assets to higher and safer places. When the flood reached the villages, people had already reached safety. The early warning thus minimised losses of life and property.

Bangladesh: Funding for the Dhaka Medical College Hospital, focussing on the management of mass casualty situations including contingency planning, medical equipment, medicine stocks and trainings. Consequently, in June 2010, following a fire causing 120 deaths, the hospital was able to save the life of over 250 patients

ASEAN: at a regional level the Commission is supporting AADMER (ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response), whose objective is to increase resilience and reduce vulnerability in local communities and institutions through support to strategies that enable them to better prepare for, mitigate and respond to natural disasters.

4.2. Focusing on prevention and preparedness

The response of the international community and affected countries to the crises in the Horn and the Sahel has shown significant progress in the capacity to address the consequences of the crises. However they have also underlined the primordial importance of **prevention** (stopping a crisis from happening) and **preparedness** (ensuring that an individual, a household, a country, or a region is ready to manage the effects of an adverse event).

It is therefore crucial that:

- Over the long-term, national and regional programmes address the underlying causes of vulnerability. Reduced vulnerability to shocks is only possible if it is embedded within partner countries' development policies. To develop these processes it is necessary that risk analysis, including disaster risk management and food crisis management, are integrated in national/regional policies. In a similar way, adaption to climate change and policy frameworks like the National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs) should also be integrated in national policies.
- **Experience gained from initiatives like SHARE and AGIR or successful pilot projects** on DRM such as those supported by the Commission's Disaster Preparedness Programme (DIPECHO) **should be better disseminated**. One of the challenges is to see how successful community-based, bottom-up projects can better feed into national and regional governmental policies.
- **Governance** structured for disaster management need to be enhanced and **stakeholders' capacity needs to be strengthened** at local and national levels. Strong local structures are essential in order to mitigate risks and to ensure the effectiveness of prevention and preparedness efforts as well as initial response operations.
- **Public private partnerships** should fully be used in appropriate contexts such as the recent G8 "New Alliance for Food and Nutrition Security" initiative,

In the case of food crises, there needs to be an integrated approach to **tackling the root causes of food insecurity**. In terms of **food availability**, this covers the diversification of food production, which may be constrained by environmental degradation and climate change. **Access to food products** requires functional markets and safety nets, noting the importance of reserves, insurances schemes, storage instruments, farmers' access to market and financial services, and emergency stocks. It also includes investments in rural infrastructure and in research and technology transfer. From a long-term perspective, support to sustainable agriculture is paramount to build up resilience in Sub-Saharan Africa where the sector provides employment to 60% of the population, notably the most vulnerable.

The Ethiopia Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP) provides valuable lessons. It provides transfers in the form of food or cash to the most vulnerable households in the country in return for participation in public works.

The PSNP is the largest social transfer scheme in sub-Saharan Africa and is cost-effective (about one third the cost) in comparison to humanitarian interventions.

Tackling the hidden crisis of child under-nutrition to reduce tomorrow's adults' vulnerability: Hunger and under-nutrition kill nearly 2.6 million children per year. Under-nutrition affects one in three children in developing countries. Often the problem starts before birth due to undernourishment of the mother. Under-nutrition is a root cause of vulnerability, especially for children up to the age of 2. It lowers intellectual and physical development, thereby reducing the capacity of tomorrow's adults to cope with adverse events. Moreover it costs many developing countries up to 2-3 percent of their Gross Domestic Product each year extending the cycle of poverty and impeding economic growth. The EU supports partners' efforts to reduce under-nutrition in short and long-term. Approaches are required across multiple sectors such as health, agriculture, water, sanitation, economic growth, and education. The EU supports the SUN (Scaling Up Nutrition) movement, which provides a framework for country partners' leadership.

Tackling the drought in North KENYA. 3.7 million Kenyans were in immediate need of food, clean water and basic sanitation during the 2011 drought. Under SHARE, the EU is enhancing its support to boost recovery and resilience building, through: assistance to streamline the Kenyan early warning system; institutional support to the Ministry of Northern Kenya; support to the National Drought Management Authority (NDMA) managing a Disaster and Drought Contingency Fund (NDDCF); enhancement of local authorities' capacities to manage an early response; and community level livelihoods projects expanding economic opportunities. Stronger institutions and increased investments in arid lands by the Government of Kenya are expected to better prepare the country to mitigate the impact of similar crisis.

4.3. Enhancing the response to crisis

Drawing inter alia on the experience gained in the Horn and the Sahel, the following elements can help improve the impact of the responses to crises when they strike:

- The preparation of a joint analytical framework prepared by both humanitarian and development actors that:
 - identifies the root causes of the crisis as well as the precise impact on the most affected populations.
 - assesses on-going interventions to see if the root causes are being addressed and also to see if there are gaps in the assistance that is being provided.
 - identifies the areas, both in terms of sectors and geographic regions, where an enhanced resilience approach could have the most impact.
 - defines strategic priorities for the short-term (early recovery) as well as for the long-term within a coherent "Resilience Approach"
- There needs to be an increase in short-term financing to support the **early recovery phase**. Recent initiatives highlight the need for a higher degree of flexibility in programming to react to fast changing needs, without reducing on-going medium/long term activities to address root causes. New modalities of assistance like

EU Trust Funds should be considered to tackle emergency or post-emergency situations.

- Most major crises span across borders. The **capacity of regional organisations** needs to be strengthened so that they can develop cross-border initiatives and promote regional integration.
- For major crises, light structures should be set up to enable **donor coordination and a structured dialogue established with partner countries and regional organisations**. It is necessary to define and formalise who does what, based on the comparative advantage of each actor in a given context. Both development and humanitarian actors should be actively engaged.
- Finding short-term interventions that have a long term impact. Even though short-term responses, and humanitarian assistance in particular, are mostly focused on life saving and asset protection, such activities can also have a long-term impact. For example, shifting from food aid to cash transfers can have a long-term effect in stimulating the local market and financing public works that can reduce the likelihood of future disasters or mitigate their impact. These types of intervention should be identified and prioritised.
- Where violent conflicts exist the resilience strategy and the wider EU political and security approach should be mutually supportive and consistent, and synergies should be developed at the levels of instruments notably the Common Security and Defence Policy instruments and the Instrument for Stability.

Flexible funding through the EU's EUR 1 billion Food Facility, AFSI and V-FLEX - The food price crisis of 2007/08 led to a response of unprecedented scale from the international community. The EU was the first donor to take proactive measures and announced a EUR 1 billion Food Facility, demonstrating the EU's ability to react on time and on a large scale. One year later, in 2009, donors pledged US\$22 billion in support of sustainable agriculture and food security (the L'Aquila Food Security Initiative, AFSI). The EU stepped up further support, committing US\$3.8 billion. Two other mechanisms exist for African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries: the FLEX (Fluctuations in Export Earnings) assists governments facing sudden losses of export earnings and the "Vulnerability FLEX" (V-FLEX) design to help countries most affected by the 2009 economic downturn due to their poor resilience. This instrument worked pre-emptively, based on forecasts of fiscal losses, with adjustments for vulnerability, acting in a counter-cyclical way to capture national financing gaps.

5. 10 STEPS TO INCREASE RESILIENCE IN FOOD INSECURE AND DISASTER PRONE COUNTRIES

1. Resilience can only be built bottom-up. The starting point for the EU approach to resilience therefore is a firm recognition of the leading role of partner countries. The EU will align its support with the partner's policies and priorities, in accordance with established Aid Effectiveness principles.
2. Action to strengthen resilience needs to be based on sound methodologies for risk and vulnerability assessments. Such assessments should serve as the basis for elaborating national resilience strategies, as well as for designing specific projects

and programmes. The EU will support the development of national resilience strategies as part of wider development strategies. The EU will engage with partner countries and key international actors to improve the methodologies for developing the assessments underlying such strategies. In order to ensure effectiveness, the EU will moreover put in place a framework for measuring the impact and results of its support for resilience.

3. In countries facing recurrent crises, increasing resilience will be a central aim of EU external assistance. EU-funded programmes will be based on a common operational assessment prepared by humanitarian and development actors, covering medium to long-term interventions. They will focus on addressing the underlying causes of crises, notably through support for prevention and preparedness activities. It will work closely with partner countries to establish capacities to elaborate and implement strategies and Disaster Reduction Management plans at national and regional level.
4. The Commission will systematically include resilience as an element in its Humanitarian Implementation Plans. The Commission will moreover strive for joint programming of the resilience-related actions in its humanitarian and development assistance so as to ensure maximum complementarity, and to ensure that short-term actions lay the groundwork for medium and long-term interventions.
5. Flexibility will be key to responding to the needs of disaster-affected countries. The Commission will continue to ensure maximum flexibility in implementing its humanitarian programmes. For development funding, in times of unforeseen crises and major disasters, the Commission will seek maximum flexibility in mobilising non-programmed funds. Additionally, the Commission will introduce flexibility into the programme design to allow quick and timely action. The EU will consider the use of Trust Funds to intervene in emergency or post-emergency situations.
6. When working to improve resilience in fragile or conflict-affected states, the EU will pursue an approach that also addresses security aspects and their impact on the vulnerability of populations. This will include an active political dialogue with partner countries and organisations in the region concerned.
7. The EU will seek to replicate existing initiatives such as SHARE and AGIR, as well as successful projects on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR). It will share and exchange lessons with its partners in order to multiply and scale up successful approaches - with the objective of incorporating them in national resilience strategies. The Commission will review regularly progress made on the resilience agenda, looking in particular at programming, methodologies and results.
8. The EU will promote innovative approaches to risk management. Working with the insurance and re-insurance industries is a particularly promising way forward. The Commission will bring forward a Green Paper in early 2013 on the role of insurance in disaster management.
9. For countries facing recurrent crises, the EU will work with host governments, other donors, regional and international organisations and other stakeholders to create platforms at country level for ensuring timely exchange of information and

coordination of short, medium and long term humanitarian and development actions to strengthen resilience.

10. The EU will promote resilience in international fora including the G8, G20, the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), the Rio Conventions, the process for revision of the Millennium Development Goals, the development of Sustainable Development Goals and discussions on the follow-up to the Hyogo Framework for Action of 2005-2015. Resilience will feature as a key theme in its partnerships with organisations such as FAO, IFAD and WFP, as well as UNISDR, the World Bank, and civil society organisations.

In the first quarter of the 2013, the Commission will prepare an Action Plan to set out the way forward on implementation of these principles.