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P7\_TA(2013)0578

## **Resilience and disaster risk reduction in developing countries**

### **European Parliament resolution of 11 December 2013 on the EU approach to resilience and disaster risk reduction in developing countries: learning from food security crises (2013/2110(INI))**

(2016/C 468/16)

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to Article 210 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU),
- having regard to the European Consensus on Development of 20 December 2005,
- having regard to the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid of 18 December 2007,
- having regard to the Commission communication of 8 December 2010 entitled ‘The mid-term review of the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid Action Plan — implementing effective, principled EU humanitarian action’ (COM(2010)0722),
- having regard to the Commission communication entitled ‘The EU approach to resilience: learning from food security crises’ of 3 October 2012 (COM(2012)0586) (hereinafter: 2012 Resilience Communication),
- having regard to the Commission staff working document entitled ‘Action plan for resilience in crisis-prone countries 2013-2020’ of 19 June 2013 (SWD(2013)0227),
- having regard to the Council conclusions on the EU approach to resilience of 28 May 2013,
- having regard to the Commission communication entitled ‘EU strategy for supporting disaster risk reduction in developing countries’ of 23 February 2009 (COM(2009)0084),
- having regard to the Commission staff working document entitled ‘Implementation plan of the EU strategy for supporting disaster risk reduction in developing countries 2011-2014’ of 16 February 2011 (SEC(2011)0215),
- having regard to the Council conclusions on an EU strategy for supporting disaster risk reduction in developing countries of 18 May 2009,
- having regard to the UN Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015, as adopted at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction in January 2005 in Hyogo, Japan, and endorsed by the UN General Assembly in its Resolution A/RES/60/195, and to its midterm review,
- having regard to the Commission communication entitled ‘Linking relief, rehabilitation and development — an assessment’ of 23 April 2001 (COM(2001)0153),
- having regard to the Commission communication entitled ‘Social protection in European Union development cooperation’ of 20 August 2012 (COM(2012)0446),
- having regard to its resolution of 21 September 2010 on the Commission communication: A Community approach on the prevention of natural and man-made disasters <sup>(1)</sup>,
- having regard to its resolution of 27 September 2011 entitled ‘Towards a stronger European disaster response: the role of civil protection and humanitarian assistance’ <sup>(2)</sup>,

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ C 50 E, 21.2.2012, p. 30.

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ C 56 E, 26.2.2013, p. 31.

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- having regard to the Commission communication entitled ‘A decent life for all: ending poverty and giving the world a sustainable future’ of 27 February 2013 (COM(2013)0092),
  - having regard to Commission communication entitled ‘Increasing the impact of EU development policy: an agenda for change’ of 13 October 2011 (COM(2011)0637) and to the Council conclusions thereon of 14 May 2012,
  - having regard to the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States as set out in the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation adopted at the 5th High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan, South Korea, which took place from 29 November to 1 December 2011,
  - having regard to its resolution of 13 June 2013 on the Millennium Development Goals — defining the post-2015 framework <sup>(1)</sup>,
  - having regard to the Council conclusions on ‘The overarching post-2015 agenda’ of 25 June 2013,
  - having regard to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development — The future we want, which took place in June 2012 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (Rio+20), and in particular to its decisions related to disaster risk reduction,
  - having regard to the fourth session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, which took place from 19 to 23 May 2013 in Geneva, Switzerland,
  - having regard to the Commission communication entitled ‘Enhancing maternal and child nutrition in external assistance: an EU policy framework’ of 12 March 2013 (COM(2013)0141),
  - having regard to Rule 48 of its Rules of Procedure,
  - having regard to the report of the Committee on Development (A7-0375/2013),
- A. whereas the Commission defined resilience in its 2012 Resilience Communication as ‘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’;
- B. whereas Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) is a key component in achieving resilience; whereas DRR involves analysing and managing hazards in order to reduce vulnerability to disasters, and covers activities which support preparedness, prevention and mitigation at all levels from local to international;
- C. whereas linking relief, rehabilitation and development (LRRD) is an important tool in the resilience approach, which helps overcome the operational and funding gaps between the relief and the development phases;
- D. whereas the Hyogo Framework for Action is an invaluable instrument for advancing the DRR agenda worldwide and whereas it expires in 2015; whereas it is expected that the post-2015 framework for DRR will be adopted at the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Japan early in 2015;
- E. whereas the mid-term review of the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid noted that progress has been made with DRR, but that further practical progress is essential;
- F. whereas, according to the UN, since 1992 4,4 billion people have been affected by disasters, USD 2 trillion worth of damage has been caused and 1,3 million people have been killed; whereas the cost of disaster loss was over USD 300 billion in 2011; whereas one dollar invested in disaster risk reduction in a crisis-prone area saves at least four dollars in relief and rehabilitation costs in the future, according to Asian Development Bank estimates;

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<sup>(1)</sup> Texts adopted, P7\_TA(2013)0283.

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- G. whereas the interconnected supply chains of today's globalised world mean that economic losses sustained in one region have global reverberations; it is estimated, for example, that the 2011 floods in Thailand set global industrial production back by 2,5 %;
- H. whereas the cost of disasters is increasing as climate change generates more severe weather-related events, in addition to rapid and inadequately managed urbanisation, population growth, land degradation and scarcity of natural resources; whereas food and nutrition crises are becoming more frequent in many regions of the developing world;
- I. whereas DRR and resilience efforts must be in addition to, rather than replacing, efforts by developed countries to reduce their contribution to climate change;
- J. whereas in times of financial consolidation there is a significant need to use resources effectively and efficiently; whereas funding for DRR needs to have a long-term perspective and should reflect real risks with a key focus on assisting those most vulnerable to shocks;
- K. whereas China has spent USD 3,15 billion on reducing the impact of floods, thereby averting losses estimated at USD 12 billion; whereas other examples of success include Bangladesh, Cuba, Vietnam and Madagascar, which have been able to reduce significantly the impact of meteorological hazards such as tropical storms and floods through improved early warning systems, disaster preparedness and other risk-reduction measures;
- L. whereas in most countries private-sector investment represents a high share of the overall investment and whereas national economic development and resilience to disasters depend on disaster-risk-sensitive investment by the private sector;
- M. whereas the UN predicts that the world's urban population will increase by 72 % by 2050, and that most urban growth will occur in less developed countries, thereby greatly increasing the number of people exposed to disaster risk;
- N. whereas disasters can contribute to a range of further problems such as extreme poverty, food insecurity and undernutrition;
- O. whereas unsustainable development planning and practices of the past have led to increased vulnerability to disasters for many populations; whereas disaster risk assessment needs to be a precondition for development planning and programmes;
- P. whereas lack of coordination between EU Member States and other donor countries in post-crisis situations reduces the impact of combined efforts; whereas increased donor coordination in both post-crisis situations and resilience-building efforts can generate significant savings and improved efficiency in development goals;
- Q. whereas the Global Assessment Report is now established as a credible global source for the analysis of hazard risks and vulnerability trends; whereas the lack of accurate disaster loss data nevertheless remains a major challenge;
- R. whereas regional integration leads to economic, political and social progress;
- S. whereas the practice of land transfer should be governed by a regulation to ensure that it does not cause harm to the rural population;

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***EU approach to resilience***

1. Welcomes the Commission's 2012 Resilience Communication and its objectives; encourages the Commission to actively pursue the proposals in the communication and to ensure that a long-term approach to resilience-building and DRR is developed further which includes both humanitarian and development streams and presents a clear link between the two;
2. Welcomes the Action Plan for Resilience in Crisis-Prone Countries 2013-2020 and its priorities; urges the Commission, together with the European External Action Service (EEAS), to implement its proposals and priorities and to ensure that consistent progress is made on achieving its objectives;
3. Is concerned that resilience, and more specifically DRR, are mentioned only briefly in the Council conclusions on 'The overarching post-2015 agenda'; believes that more emphasis needs to be placed on these issues in the post-2015 agenda;
4. Calls on the Commission to actively integrate resilience measures into both the humanitarian and the development sides of programming; stresses that there needs to be a stronger link between short-term humanitarian responses and longer-term development programming and that this should fit into the EU's overall resilience approach;
5. Considers that the main focus of the EU's resilience approach must be the most vulnerable, poorest and most marginalised populations, who have high exposure to risks, notably natural disasters, and little protection against such shocks, including slow-onset events; emphasises that a long-term resilience approach needs to target the root causes of risk vulnerability and to significantly reduce underlying risk factors;
6. Stresses that the EU's long-term resilience approach should address the deterioration of the ecosystem, particularly agriculture, water, biodiversity and fish resources, and calls on the EU to adopt a coherent policy to reduce vulnerability through its risk reduction strategy, which can be achieved by adopting sustainable agricultural production methods and systems, such as crop-rotation, agro-ecology, agro-forestry, organic agriculture and small-holder farming;
7. Calls on the Commission to target fragile and crisis-prone countries in its resilience agenda and to invest in strengthening local institutions in order to achieve stability and ensure that basic services are provided for vulnerable populations;
8. Stresses that the gap between the relief and the development phases can be overcome through LRRD, which seeks to ensure synergy between humanitarian and development work; takes the view that it is important to address in more detail transition strategies and parallel linkages between humanitarian aid and development cooperation, especially in disaster-prone countries, protracted crises and countries emerging from disasters;
9. Insists that disaster-prone countries should play a leading role and should be the main actor in defining their priorities and transition strategies from humanitarian aid to a long-term development strategy, as they are better placed to know the local reality, so as to define what is best for their own communities;
10. Stresses that climate change is exacerbating the underlying risk factors and therefore needs to be taken into account in resilience strategies, in particular climate adaptation;

***Disaster risk reduction as an essential component of resilience***

11. Stresses that investing in DRR measures in advance of disasters is far more cost-effective than funding disaster response after the event; therefore encourages further investment in DRR and resilience strategies in developing countries, particularly in the most vulnerable areas, and its inclusion in national development plans;

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12. Highlights that effective disaster response management takes into account the setting in place of a framework allowing for the immediate mobilisation of all necessary resources;
13. Stresses that DRR should be prioritised accordingly in future development programming and mainstreamed into development and humanitarian programming in all fragile and risk-prone countries;
14. Calls on the EU, its Member States and its partner countries' governments to improve and develop DRR strategies in developing countries by implementing risk assessment programmes and enhancing early warning systems, particularly in fragile and crisis-prone countries, by strengthening disaster preparedness with a view to effective responses at all levels and by supporting more sustainable development planning in partner countries;
15. Calls on partner countries to establish accounting systems capable of recording local losses and sharing information between the local and national levels for planning and statistical purposes; notes that a certain degree of standardisation may help to record losses better at regional level and thereby support regional cooperation;
16. Calls on the EU and its Member States, as well as on the partner countries to consider environmental sustainability and disaster risk management in programmes of land governance reform and land registration mechanisms;
17. Notes that DRR and climate change adaptation are interrelated issues and therefore calls on the Commission and all actors to further integrate DRR and climate change adaptation strategies such as, inter alia, existing National Adaption Programmes of Action (NAPAs) and to include them in the planning phase of the 11th EDF, to seek concrete financial support, for example through the implementation of the Global Climate Change Alliance and to coordinate efforts to harmonise these activities;
18. Supports a complementary and coherent approach to the MDG and DRR post-2015 frameworks; considers that the post-MDG and post-HFA (Hyogo framework for action) processes need to take account of the outcomes of the current frameworks and to address the experiences faced by those most affected by disasters and crises; reiterates that DRR, climate risk management and resilience need to be strongly integrated into the post-2015 framework;

***Sustainable development, social protection and community resilience***

19. Stresses that the resilience approach must bring sustainable benefits to the most vulnerable sections of society, particularly those living in extreme poverty, those living in informal settlements or slums and indigenous populations who are highly exposed to disaster risks;
20. Stresses that sustainable development must be seen as an essential element of DRR; recognises that long-term progress can only be made if underlying factors which make communities or individuals more vulnerable, such as poor environmental management, inadequate infrastructure, land degradation and poor urban planning, are addressed;
21. Understands that in developing countries, especially low-income countries, a large proportion of households living in a persistent state of poverty have very little or no social protection in general and are thus even more exposed when it comes to natural or man-made disasters; calls on the Commission to further promote social protection activities in its development cooperation programmes, with specific activities to improve state-owned systems, prevention measures and insurance for natural and man-made disasters;
22. Encourages increased attention to small-scale disasters as a key target in the resilience approach and enhanced visibility for the damage that small-scale disasters do to communities, and their impact on them;
23. Underlines the need to strengthen and develop education in the context of disasters and emergencies and to improve the dissemination, compilation and communication of information and knowledge that will help build community resilience and promote behavioural changes and a culture of disaster preparedness;

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24. Stresses the important role that local authorities and local and national civil society organisations can play in building resilience, particularly in fragile and crisis-prone countries, and encourages local authorities to develop, in consultation with local communities and civil society organisations, coherent and coordinated processes for the implementation of resilience strategies;

25. Highlights the fact that strong accountability mechanisms and monitoring should be established with the participation of local authorities, development partners, scientists, civil society, the media and the general public in order to enhance access to information and build awareness about the need for DRR strategies and resilience; calls for the regular collection of data, inter alia, meteorological data and data relating to harvest, livestock, the functioning of the markets, the nutritional condition of children and the poorest members of society, as well as data on existing DRR mechanisms and access to basic services; encourages the regular reporting and publishing of this data on publicly available platforms in order to facilitate access to information, early warning and improvement of the situation;

### *Learning from food security crises and previous disasters*

26. Points out that disasters and emergencies are often followed by food crises and malnutrition among the affected populations, especially children; stresses also that food crises are disasters in themselves and that the resilience approach, which focuses on enhancing food security and nutrition, must be systematically incorporated into programming decisions;

27. Calls on the EU to draw lessons from its cooperation policy in the past decades and to put forward proposals to promote Policy Coherence for Development in practice by linking development aid and other EU policy areas such as agriculture, trade, taxation, climate change and investment;

28. Urges the Commission to integrate the issue of land grabbing into its policy dialogue with developing countries in order to make Policy Coherence the corner stone of development cooperation at national as well as international level and to avoid the expropriation of small farmers, the increased vulnerability of the poor in rural areas and the unsustainable use of land and water;

29. Notes that food and nutrition crises are becoming more frequent in the Sahel and Horn of Africa regions, where millions of people are without access to adequate food; points out that the 2011 Horn of Africa food crisis and the 2012 Sahel food crisis demonstrated that humanitarian assistance alone can neither break the cycle of chronic hunger and malnutrition nor address its root causes; stresses the importance of addressing the underlying causes of persistent food insecurity in these regions, namely poor access to appropriate basic services and education, acute poverty, inadequate support for small-scale agriculture and livestock keeping, land access problems, environmental degradation, rapid population growth, market failures, declining per capita food production and poor governance; stress that the underlying causes leading to food crises today are more complex than in the past, with, for example, market-related and prices shocks more frequent and more likely to affect poor people;

30. Notes that chronic food and nutrition insecurity is the first and most important factor of vulnerability to food crises, because it reduces people's capacity to prepare for risks, to withstand crises and to bounce back after them; notes also that chronic food and nutrition insecurity produces long-term negative effects that reduce human capital by stunting the growth of children and affecting societies' capacity to develop; recognises that high and highly volatile food price crises are costly and complex to address; points out that the resilience approach established by the Commission is going in the right direction to address the root causes of vulnerability, among the most important of which are chronic food and nutrition insecurity;

31. Is of the view that the EU Action Plan for Resilience should aim at implementing Policy Coherence for Development and address issues relating to food security and climate resilience by eliminating unsustainable practices such as the dumping of agricultural products and unfair trade rules; calls on the EU to address sustainable agriculture in a holistic manner at national and international level;

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32. Welcomes both the joint development-humanitarian approach and the regional approach in the EU initiative 'Supporting the Horn of Africa's Resilience' (SHARE) and in the EU-led Global Alliance for Resilience Initiative (AGIR) for the Sahel region; calls for even greater attention to be paid to these regions and for even better cooperation and coordination among national governments, international donors, civil society and the private sector in breaking down barriers between the development and the humanitarian approaches, between 'normal' and 'crisis' responses;

33. Calls for an effective approach to resilience, which must be multi-institutional, coordinated, comprehensive and systematic, and include a number of elements such as the provision of predictable and targeted social safety nets for the most vulnerable, which would not only ensure that households have immediate access to food during crises, but also guarantee fast recovery and resilience to future shocks; calls for the reduction of child undernutrition to be made central to resilience through coordinated national plans prioritising in particular children under two and pregnant women;

34. Notes that evidence from Niger, Burkina Faso and Mali indicates that low-cost agro-ecological techniques, particularly agro-forestry and soil and water conservation, have improved small-scale farmers' resilience to food insecurity; stresses, however, that agro-ecological agriculture alone cannot overcome the structural causes of food insecurity; calls for non-agricultural components to be incorporated into agricultural interventions and for it to be ensured that improved nutrition is an explicit objective of agricultural programmes; calls in addition for it to be ensured that women farmers also benefit from the programmes by making sure that the barriers created by gender inequalities (such as access to land, credit, extension services and input) are taken into account in the design of agricultural programmes;

#### ***Better coordination of efforts and improved funding methods***

35. Points out that it is crucial for the Member States and EU institutions to coordinate their development and humanitarian activities better and to work together to make their aid more effective; points to the European Parliament's 'Cost of non-Europe in Development Policy' study of June 2013, which estimates that EUR 800 million could be saved annually in transaction costs if donors concentrated their aid efforts on fewer countries and activities, and that an extra EUR 8,4 billion in annual savings could be achieved through better cross-country allocation patterns;

36. Notes the important contribution of mobile small-scale livestock keepers in producing meat, milk and blood in areas which are ill-suited to other forms of agriculture; stresses the important role that they play in feeding communities as well as their positive contribution to food security and nutrition, as evidenced in arid and semi-arid lands demonstrating that children in pastoral areas tend to have better food security than those who are settled in cities and villages; calls therefore for the rights and needs of those pastoral populations to be taken into account when designing agricultural interventions and programmes;

37. Stresses the need to increase the capacity of small farms by promoting public-private investment, including by granting microcredit to women;

38. Takes the view that savings made by better donor coordination could, for example, be put to use in DRR activities and that these in turn would generate a significant return, thereby creating a virtuous circle;

39. Welcomes the Commission's proposal in the 2013 Action Plan for Resilience that an annual EU Resilience Forum should be held; looks upon this as an opportunity to coordinate resilience efforts among public institutions, including national parliaments and the European Parliament, the private sector, and NGOs and civil society, in order to make well coordinated progress on DRR and resilience, with all the actors working together;

40. Encourages increased collaboration between the public sector and the private sector on DRR and resilience; calls on the Commission to facilitate the involvement of the private sector by creating incentives and the right environment for private entities to share their expertise on building resilience and reducing risk; however, urges the Commission in this

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regard to draft a proposal that establishes rules on public-private partnership, including social and ecological impact assessments, to prevent, for example, the exacerbation of land-use conflicts or conflicts over access to water, particularly to protect smallholder farmers; encourages, furthermore, the offer of support to ACP countries for the purposes of scrutinising contracts with multinational investors; moreover, encourages the transparency of investments and investment objective targets, on platforms available to civil society;

41. Recommends increased collaboration with non-EU countries and international and regional institutions when it comes to disaster preparedness, as well as disaster response and reconstruction; supports a strengthening of cooperation between the Commission and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) with a view to improving the EU's action on DRR issues;

42. Emphasises that while the EU and international organisations can make progress on DRR and resilience in developing countries through their programmes, it is primarily the responsibility of national governments to ensure the safety of their citizens, and that partner countries therefore need to have a strong political commitment to supporting and implementing activities that enhance resilience and DRR;

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43. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission.

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