Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Regional Conference

"Strengthening resilient food and agriculture systems –Implementing the Sendai Framework for DRR in the Agriculture Sector in Asia and the Pacific"

15 - 16 March 2018, Ha Noi, Viet Nam

Session Concept Note

Session	**Parallel Session S6 – Food and Agriculture for Resilient Urbanization**
Title	***Unpacking risks to and pathways from food and agriculture for resilient urbanization***
Date **Time**	Friday 16th March 2018 10.30 – 13.00 hours
Venue	TBC
Organizers	FAO RAP with GEAG Contact: Kaustubh Devale (Kaustubh.Devale@fao.org)
Background	Rapidly urbanising Asian countries increasingly contend with the impact of disasters and climate-induced extreme events. In the past decade alone, Asian cities like Mumbai, Colombo, Bangkok, and Manila have faced massive disruptions to food systems, asset losses, unusual price rise and hampered business operations for as long as three months due to events like water-logging and flooding. By 2030[i], disasters will cost cities $314 billion and climate change may push up to 77 million urban residents into poverty. With almost 60 percent of places that will be urbanized by 2030 yet to be built, the world has a window of opportunity for investment in urban resilience. This has rightfully brought attention towards urban disaster risks and initiatives towards conceptualising disaster risk reduction (DRR) and resilience building in the urban context. There is growing recognition that urban areas – with their unique community structures, governance mechanisms and risk landscapes – need different approaches to DRR than those that have been implemented in rural areas. There has also been a shift in focus from preparedness and response alone, towards risk-informed land use planning and structural and non-structural mitigation measures. At the same time, this push for distinctiveness is shifting the narrative away from the interdependencies between urban and rural areas. Risk reduction initiatives seldom account for the fact that risk itself travels between the rural and the urban, and often resides at the interstices of their dependencies. Perhaps, in no other sector are these dependencies more apparent as in agriculture. **The Urban-Rural and Agriculture** The nature and quantum of urban food demands greatly influence rural agriculture practices, including changes in land-use, market-driven production practices and consumer-

	oriented crop choices that are often unsustainable and increase risks to the food and agriculture systems. The process of urbanisation itself alters the rural landscape, especially agrarian ecosystems – be it through planned large-scale projects or unplanned organic development. In Asia, urbanisation often takes the latter form wherein peri-urban and rural areas surrounding larger towns transition to urban areas without adequate or risk-informed infrastructure development. Unregulated development and land-use policies that often do not take into account disaster and climate risks put further pressures on natural resources like water bodies and wetlands, hills and green cover, altering the eco-systems in such a way that new disaster risks are created or the existing ones exacerbated. These include risks in both newly urbanised areas and surrounding peri-urban and rural areas. Decreasing productivity and lucrativeness of agriculture, driven increasingly by climate and disasters, is one of the biggest causal factors for rural-urban migration. Between 2008 and 2014, 184.6 million people were forced from their homes due to natural hazard induced disasters and climate-related emergencies - combined with a host of socioeconomic factors - to migrate in ever greater numbers internally and across borders typically to urban and peri-urban areas. One[ii] in seven people globally are migrants of which 760 million were internal migrants (rural to urban in the same country) in 2013. A large percentage of these internal migrants live in informal settlements with limited livelihood and food-nutrition security. Urban risk exposure is often highest in informal settlements – home to the growing number of people (both city-born and recent migrants) who cannot afford to buy, rent or build formal housing and often struggle to access resources, services, opportunities and information that are key to ensuring safety and well-being in the face of hazards. Limited food-nutrition security, including 'silent hunger' levels, further compromise capacities to cope with shocks, creating cycles of urban poverty. Recent global agreements and frameworks such as the 'New Urban Agenda (NUA)'[iii], Habitat III[iv] and the Milan Pact take cognisance of the importance of understanding these urban-rural linkages for achieving the sustainable development goals. The NUA emphasizes: • Food security and nutrition as a critical issue for cities, • Strengthening urban rural linkages and a necessity to achieve food security and nutrition, • Integrating territorial planning for food security and nutrition, and • Centrality and cross cutting nature of agriculture and food systems. **Agriculture and Resilient Urbanisation** Agriculture both bears the brunt of disaster and climate risks and offers solutions for risk reduction in urban areas. Not only resilient rural agriculture plays an important role for food and nutrition security in urban areas, recent developments in urban agriculture offer opportunities for new thinking about urban resilience. Urban agriculture is increasingly[v] playing a positive role in food and nutrition security for the urban areas in Asia.15-20% of the world's food is produced in urban

areas while in Hanoi, 80% of fresh vegetables, 50% of pork, poultry and fresh water fish, as well as 40% of eggs, originate from urban and peri-urban areas (Nguyen Tien Dinh, 2000). In the urban and peri-urban area of Shanghai, 60% of the city's vegetables, 100% of the milk, 90% of the eggs, and 50% of pork and poultry meat is produced (Cai Yi-Zhang and Zhang Zhangen in Bakker et al. 2000). In Java, home gardens provide for 18% of caloric consumption and 14% of proteins of the urban population (Ning Purnomohadi 2000).[vi]

Urban agriculture - including roof-top and backyard cultivation and rearing of poultry - promoting green cover, water-bodies, open spaces, and commons in urban areas as well as cultivation collectives therein, and allocating land for non-infrastructure purposes through mandatory 'green-blue zonation' and land-use policies – can:

- contribute to enhancing food and nutrition security,
- provide employment and recreation benefits,
- be an avenue for sustainable use of resources and recycling of the huge organic waste generated daily in the urban areas, and
- contribute to climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts.

It is increasingly important to revitalise ecosystems in urban and urbanising areas, not only because they can provide natural protection against hazards such as floods and storm surges but also because they are important sources of livelihoods for the most vulnerable as well as provide an additional food source for urban areas including during disasters.

There is also a growing trend of urban citizens purchasing land for agriculture in the surrounding peri-urban and rural areas in some Asian cities, including farm-lands that feed the rising urban demand for 'organic food'. Co-opting these individual investors into making climate-informed farming choices also offers an opportunity for influencing sustainable consumption and production practices.

Further, peri-urban areas, the transition-lands between rural and urban still remain an unrecognised and untapped zone for climate and DRR initiatives. Located between large urban centres and rural areas, these areas have the potential for locking in either risk or resilience. Peri-urban areas are often the buffer zones for urban waste, drainage and water run-off as well as the custodians of natural eco-systems that have been destroyed completely in urbanised areas. In many ways, they are a spatial representation of the "urban-rural linkage" - melting pots of communities, trade-flows and risks.

There is hence a need to dialogue on how Asian countries should chart their individual and collective journeys towards strengthening resilience of food and agriculture systems against disaster and climate change as a significant contribution to urban resilience, and vice versa, towards managing urbanization that prevents and reduces risks to agriculture and rural development. Towards this, this session will explore:

- How can we better understand the evolving nature, interaction and inter-connectedness of risks facing food and agriculture due to urbanization and vice versa, urban risks driven by deteriorating rural and peri-urban environment and risky agriculture practices?

	• What role can food and agriculture play in resilient and sustainable urbanization? What are the emerging lessons from the ongoing initiatives and practices for the same? • What are the priority actions and associated risk governance mechanisms needed for enhancing the role of food and agriculture for resilient urbanisation?
Session objectives	The session aims to: • Develop a common understanding of the significance of resilient food and agriculture systems for resilient urbanization through analysis of the inter-linked urban, rural and agriculture risks' context; • Facilitate a multi-stakeholder dialogue to take stock of ongoing actions pertaining food and agriculture for resilient urbanization in light of the 2030 Agenda; • Deliberate on priority actions at policy, institution and programmatic level to enhance resilience of food and agriculture to contribute to resilient urbanization, and thereby to further the implementation of the SFDRR and the overall 2030 Agenda in the region.
Expected outcomes	• Enhanced and shared understanding on inter-linkages between urban, rural and agriculture risks and the significance of resilient food and agriculture for resilient urbanization. • A set of recommendations on policy, programmatic and local actions for safeguarding food and nutrition security and strengthening resilience of agriculture systems in the context of rapid urbanization in the light of sectoral implementation of the SFDRR.
Session format	The session could be a combination of a panel discussion and plenary and/or group discussion. The indicative schedule is below: 10.30 – 10.35 Introduction by the Chair 10.35 – 11.50 Panel discussion 11.50 – 12.50 Plenary and/or 4 roundtable discussion to identifying priority actions and set of recommendations for safeguarding food and nutrition security and strengthening the role of food and agriculture systems for resilient urbanization in Asia 12.50 – 13.00 Wrap up by the Chair

Participants who would like to contribute papers and/or speak as a panellist at this session,

Please click here for contribution and send the information of your contribution to kaustubh.devale@fao.org and agrisendai2018@gmail.com

[i] http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2016/10/12/habitat-iii-that-once-every-20-years-global-urban-event

[ii] For ex. see: FAO, 2017, 'World Food Day: Change the future of migration- Invest in food security and rural development'; IOM, 2017, 'IOM in Asia and Pacific 2017-2020', International Organization for Migration Regional office for Asia-Pacific; https://www.iom.int/asia-and-pacific; http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/publications/migrationreport/docs/migration-regions-infographics.pdf; https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/country/AP/IOM-Strategy-in-Asia-and-the-Pacific-2017-2020.pdf

[iii] http://resilientcities2017.iclei.org/fileadmin/sites/resilient-cities/files/Resilient_Cities_2017/PPTs/F4_Santini.pdf

[iv] http://habitat3.org/wp-content/uploads/NUA-English.pdf

[v] http://www.futuredirections.org.au/publication/feeding-the-cities-is-urban-agriculture-the-future-of-food-security/

[vi] http://www.ruaf.org/urban-agriculture-what-and-why