

New UN pact aims to boost sharing of climate-related data to fight hunger



Lower precipitation due to climate change causes water scarcity and reduced food production

4 September 2009 – In a bid to step up the fight against global hunger, two United Nations agencies have agreed to greater sharing of information on weather patterns and other climate-related data that can help predict the location of the next emergency food shortage.

World Meteorological Organization (WMO) data concerning floods, hurricanes, mudslides, drought and other forms of severe weather can give the World Food Programme (**WFP**) a critical advantage in helping communities to prepare and react to such impacts of climate change that damage crops, homes and lives, according to a joint news release issued by the agencies.

Under the recently signed Memorandum of Understanding, WFP and **WMO** will broaden collaboration on the collection and use of complex weather data, which the food agency analyses for its emergency preparedness, disaster risk reduction and vulnerability assessment efforts in the field.

“Climate change is a crisis multiplier,” WFP Deputy Executive Director Staffan de Mistura told reporters at the 3rd World Climate Conference in Geneva on Wednesday.

Mr. de Mistura noted that in countries affected by conflict or the double blow of the financial and food price-hike crises, climate change intensifies the suffering.

Referring to his time in Iraq, where Mr. de Mistura was the top UN envoy before joining WFP, he said there “were constant sandstorms caused by drought and desertification. People were already suffering from all the problems in Iraq that we all know only too well and the sandstorms made a difficult situation worse.”

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