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Critical Actions for Climate Change Adaption**

Stockholm, October 26, 2009—Global experts and policy makers working on disaster risk reduction begin discussions today at the **2009 Stockholm Policy Forum on Climate-Smart Disaster Risk Reduction**. The Forum aims to address the issue of reducing risks associated with weather-related hazards, a key component to climate change adaptation. The Forum will also identify promising practices and critical actions for post-Copenhagen implementation of adaptation.

The Forum is being hosted jointly by the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR), the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR). It will focus on many of the challenges that adapting to a changing climate implies – and that the disaster risk management community has been grappling with for decades. These include ensuring an interdisciplinary approach to risk reduction efforts, promoting coordination, ensuring political leadership, securing adequate financing, facilitating regional cooperation, and supporting local level action, among others.

“Poor people have always managed a myriad of risks—driven by persistent poverty, social marginalization, and ecosystem degradation—and climate change is likely to exacerbate them,” said **Per Byman, Team Director, Humanitarian Team, Sida, and GFDRR Co-chair**. “It is essential that the 15th Conference of the Parties (COP-15) coming up in Copenhagen in December results in concrete agreements and actions, including adequate political and financial support to help the poorest adapt to the impacts of climate change. We are confident that the Forum will provide a policy framework to address the links between disaster risk management and adaptation.”

The Stockholm seminar has been organized with the assistance of Sida, the Swedish international development cooperation agency. The Government of Sweden has provided leadership on improving development aid and championing the need to address the human impacts of climate change. Through the work of the Swedish Commission on Climate Change and Development, Sweden has been a strong supporter of mainstreaming effective disaster risk reduction into development efforts and adaptation actions.

"We expect that the Stockholm Policy Forum will further motivate the increase of investments to reduce climate-related disasters which are already causing huge losses of lives and economic assets," said **Margareta Wahlström, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction**. "If we invest more today in known disaster reduction measures such as early warning systems, water management and ecosystem restoration, we will then reduce adaptation costs which are already estimated to US\$250 Billion per annum by 2020."

Disaster risk management and risk reduction strategies were identified by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Parties in the Bali Action Plan of 2007 as a key negotiation element for an agreement to be reached at the COP-15. Although there are many assumed synergies between disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation, these are not yet in place and the competing issues covered in adaptation have potential to delay implementing critical action on the ground.

About GFDRR

The Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) is a partnership of 21 countries, the ACP Secretariat, the European Commission, the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, and the World Bank, committed to helping disaster-prone developing countries and regions reduce their vulnerability to natural hazards and adapt to climate change. GFDRR promotes technical and financial assistance to high-risk low- and middle-income countries based on a business model of ex-ante support to mainstream disaster risk reduction in national development strategies and investments, and ex post disaster assistance for sustainable recovery. As part of its mandate, GFDRR promotes global knowledge and good practices, supports initiatives for enhanced global and regional cooperation, and promotes greater South-South cooperation in disaster risk reduction. For more information, visit www.gfdr.org.