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Introduction and Objectives:

Drought as a natural disaster has caused many economical and social damages to human beings, since the early human civilization, so human society always struggled with this natural disaster to mitigate its negative impact. Although referring to the history of human civilization and existing documents shows that this disaster caused severe threat on life at any time and place, but in recent decades, population increase and increasing demand for food supplies and other needs on one hand and climate change on the other hand has caused increase on the intensity and variety of this disaster to affecting more population at wider dimensions. According to the designed future prospects for the human society in future decades, this situation will not only be decreased, but it will increase if proper measures are not taken.

One of the most effective and useful measures for wisely facing any cases, especially natural disasters which its occurrence are predictable, is having an organised vision on that disaster.

The global experiences proved that in respect to drought, although national programs and actions could be potentially useful and acceptable, but having an integrated international plan for drought management in line with the experiences of various countries in the world could significantly improve the capacity of countries in reducing the negative impacts of this disaster.

With respect to the necessity of strengthening the societies for confronting droughts, especially in developing and less developed countries and effective use of the experiences of developed countries in this respect and also based on the contents of UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) which emphasises on codifying a Drought Preparedness Plan, establishing the International Drought Initiative (IDI) could be an appropriate chance mobilizing wills to confront different dimensions of this disaster.

In accordance with previous successful international experiences, before executing procedures for running the plan, planning a general framework as the road map including the main objectives and missions of the plan and its approval at the highest decision making level is necessary for putting the plan into the action and reaching the goals of the International Drought Initiative. The present document is developed as a draft for future investigation by the advisory committee and after approval at the management level, the International Drought Initiative will be sent to International entities.
IDI History

In IHP National Committee’s meeting which was held in Tehran, 2009, The Regional Centre on Urban Water Management proposed establishing an international entity for predicting, investigating, coping and mitigating the negative effects of droughts. With respect to high importance of drought and its negative effects on human life in arid and semi-arid regions, it is considered to investigate this initiative as a global project, managed by the Islamic Republic of Iran and in close cooperation with international entities.

A similar initiative is established in Japan for flood management, as International Flood Initiative.

This proposal after approval by the members was sent to UNESCO and in its turn was referred to UNESCO – IHP General Conference.

This proposal as well as other proposals such as "Integrated Water Management at the river basin level" were proposed in the 19th Session of IHP and after negotiations and supports received by the majority of member states was approved and announced to I.R. Iran.

After investigations made in the Iranian Ministry of Energy, Deputy for Water and Watewater Affairs, the responsibility for establishing and executing this initiative was left to the Regional Centre on Urban Water Management.

With the guidance of the Regional Centre on Urban Water Management and holding coordinating meetings in IDI Secretariat, the first version of IDI road map and brochure as the first document of this initiative is developed and printed for being reviewed in the initiative meeting.
Principles of forming the International Drought Initiative

The proposal of the establishment of the International Drought Initiative is based on the following principles:

- The International drought Initiative is a program which requires adequate time for being put into practice
- The International Drought Initiative is based on the three following important issues
  - Creating a capable and suitable environment for following up relevant issues
  - Facilitating the establishment, expansion and continuous relation between active organizations at the national and international level
  - Creating an integrated data bank in the field of drought
- Different measures and initiative achievements including ISI and IFI should be used when compiling and applying IDI
- The role of UN and Non-governmental affiliated entities as well as developed countries should be taken into consideration when compiling and implementing this initiative, therefore effective cooperation of such entities gains a high importance in the success to be achieved.
- Providing the ground for experience and knowledge transfer amongst the members, promoting the culture and developing managerial and cooperative capacities between the members of this initiative
The main issues of the roadmap

- Compiling the organizational chart
- Preparing the data bank of active entities in the field of drought at the national and international level including institutes, projects, publications and gatherings
- Establishing continuous relation with UN and Non-governmental affiliated institutes as well as experienced countries for successfully compiling and implementing drought management plans
- Organizing a one day gathering on “determining the strategies of launching the international drought initiative at the national level with the aim of determining, reviewing and addressing the principles, basics and main framework of the IDI activities, the method for corresponding with other institutes through this initiative, and establishing the drought data bank at the national level in close cooperation with all stakeholders including governmental managers, parliament representatives, universities, private section, governmental and non-governmental organizations active in the field of drought
- Establishing the drought data bank in order to compile and implement the plans along with determining relevant disciplines
- Compiling the document entitled as “international and national policies and visions in the field of drought” by taking benefit of existing documents
- Forming the advisory committee, Executive – Strategic Council and activating the secretariat and relevant working groups
- Preparing and compiling the methodology of gathering documents related to drought organizations at the national and international level
- Creating the IDI website and data bank
- Preparing the draft plans of the IDI by citing its financial requirements by taking into account the following priorities
  - Coordinating with effective sections
  - Drought management by relying on risk management
  - Promoting statistical collection systems and basic drought data
- Strengthening public participation and promoting the level of awareness with the aim of increasing the initiative effectiveness
- Promoting and developing organizational cooperation at the national level with the aim of increasing capacities and omitting parallel activities
- Compiling awareness programs, knowledge exchange and manpower capacity building
- Determining strategies for developing national and international cooperation
- Equipping financial and technical resources required for IDI activities
- Taking benefit of UNESCO’s support
In this concern, the three following steps have been anticipated which will be further elaborated:

1- **Assessing the limitations**: With no doubt, the existing obstacles and limitations should be taken into consideration when compiling an initiative.

   Precise and logical assessment of these limitations could lead the program to a real situation and to a successful implementation. Assessment of the following issues should be taken into consideration when compiling the international drought initiative.
   a. Assessment of human resources and experts in the development and implementation of programs
   b. Assessment of financial resources needed and the method of supplying
   c. Assessment of law and legal barriers
   d. Editing clear and precise terms of references for each entities and their methods of reporting to the IDI Secretariat
   e. A clear mechanism on ways of co-ordination, communication and leadership of activities

   The mentioned assessments for being considered during the action plan must be prepared.

2- **Organizing the Executive – Strategic Council for IDI**: Organizing the mentioned council for introducing IDI activities and providing ensuring links between all active entities in the field of drought at national and international level has specific importance and it is a major step in activating the IDI activities.

3- **Education and Training Programs**: An implemented program will lead to success when all members and societies fully acknowledge its goals and framework. Such a condition depends on the awareness of national and international communities in the field of drought as well as its impacts and confronting methods. Hence, the training activities also are one of the major parts of International Drought Initiative (IDI). IDI, by taking into account that continuous and long-term training programs will have appropriate response from recipient of trainers, will focus to 3 major steps as follows:
   a. Technical trainings through organizing specific training workshops and courses for managers and experts in the field of drought at international level
   b. Enhanced public awareness through various educational courses on the various aspects of droughts and public participation in drought combating programs
   c. Technical training for public media
IDI Objectives

1- Surveying the current situation of drought management in selected countries (or all countries) including aspects such as: policy making, structural and non-structural plans;

2- Surveying the plans and measures of international and regional governmental/non-governmental entities involved in drought management;

3- Based on the above-noted assessments, preparing and compiling the World Report on Drought Management (WRDM) and investigating the gaps and strong points at various geopolitical scales (national, regional, global);

4- Executing necessary surveys to clarify needs and priorities of global measures in the framework of IDI;

5- Establishing the World Drought Watch (WDW) and Global Drought Preparedness Network (GDPN);

6- Helping affected countries especially developing and less developed countries to prepare and compile strategic and practical drought management plans;

7- Develop and build capacities in: drought monitoring, mitigation, preparedness techniques and methodologies;

8- Holding international and regional conferences, seminars and workshops to exchange viewpoints, improve joint activities and exchange knowledge and experience related to different aspects of drought management;

9- Prepare and compile short-term, mid-term and long-term plans (perspective) for IDI and defining the indicators for assessing the progress made;

10- Supply financial, technical and logistic resources which are necessary for IDI activities.

11- Developing approaches to assess and mitigate the impacts of drought

12- Strengthen drought prediction and awareness for rural and urban areas

13- Empowering capabilities of drought adaptation

14- Providing solutions for incorporating drought management into schools and universities curricula
IDI Mission

1- Preparing and recommending policies and strategies to drought management
2- Required measures for emergency situation
3- Developing operational programs and related methodology
4- Determining the situation of stakeholders
5- Establishing the early warning systems
6- Cooperating with networks/entities for meteorological data and information
7- Methodology of assessing damages
8- Procedure for addressing environmental conflicts
9- Identify gaps and future requirements between developed and developing countries in relation to the drought and organizing necessary activities of all countries to follow acceptable standards at an appropriate period
10- Promoting culture and general knowledge and expertise in management and coping with drought
The executive principles of the International drought Initiative

1- Coping with drought
2- Capable and effective involvement
3- National and international cooperation
4- Training and promoting scientific and professional basics of drought management
5- Taking benefit of existing potentials at the international levels
Proposed organizational chart for the International Drought Initiative

As the success of IDI in realizing its goals depends on coordination and participation of interested countries from one hand, and international and regional governmental / non-governmental entities from the other hand, the governance structure of this project should be set in such a way to practically encourage their participation in different steps from policy making to execution.

Chair
The chair of this initiative is the deputy minister of Energy, I. R. Iran for water and wastewater Affairs

Vice Chair
The vice Chair of the international drought initiative is determined by the deputy minister of energy, I. R. Iran.

Advisory Committee
This committee is responsible to compile the IDI bylaws including the governance structure and internal regulations after holding required meetings and exchanging viewpoints.

This committee will consist of some experienced and pioneer countries in drought management along with representatives of governmental and non-governmental entities. The presence of selected members of Intergovernmental council of IHP-UNESCO, World Meteorological Organization (WMO), International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) and United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNCCC) is essential. During the setup phase of program, the director of the Regional Centre on Urban Water Management (RCUWM) – Tehran (under the
auspices of UNESCO) will be the vice president of this initiative and provide this initiative with secretariat support.

The members of the IDI Advisory Committee will be:

- Representative of the Intergovernmental Council of IHP- UNESCO
- Representative of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO)
- Representative of the World Water Council (WWC)
- Representative of Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
- Representative of United Nations Development Program (UNDP)
- Representative of RAMSAR Wetland Convention
- Representative of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR)
- Representative of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNCCC)
- The Deputy of the Islamic Republic of Iran Ministry of Energy in Water and Wastewater affairs
- The Director of the Regional Centre on Urban Water Management - Tehran (under the auspices of UNESCO)
- 5 active and experienced experts in drought field selected by the Islamic Republic of Iran Ministry of Energy
- Representative of the Iran Department of Environment
- Representative of the most active national university in drought field
- Representative of the Iran Meteorological Organization

Note 1: The IDI director or his vice president also directs the executive – strategic council.

Advisory Committee’s Duties:

- Holding periodic meetings and reviewing the activities and outcomes of the IDI participating entities
- Reviewing IDI activities and making decision on annual plan as well as recommending extraordinary meetings if needed.
- Compiling the bylaw and required regulations for selecting members among persons, companies, organizations and qualified educational and research institutes.
- Directing all IDI activities toward the IDI mission.
- Identifying the deficiencies and future needs in regard to achieving IDI objectives
- Preparing and submitting recommendations to active IDI entities
- Anticipating and estimating annual budget and funding requirements and how to provide it
Executive – Strategic Council

This council is formed to review, clarify and explain the principles, foundations and main frameworks of the IDI activities and launching international drought data base as well as preparing the draft and required exclusive agenda of the advisory committee.

This is actually an important and main step in introducing, institutionalizing and preventing any parallel work through introducing various IDI activities as well as being the main interface of IDI activities at national and international level.

The combination and level of the members of this council is as follow:

- Representative of I. R. Iran Agriculture and Jihad Ministry
- Representative of I. R Ministry of Energy
- Representative of Iran Department of Environment
- Representative if Iran Meteorological Organization
- Representative of all national active entities in drought fields
- Representative of the Natural Disaster Organization
- Representative of one of the active Iranian universities in this field
- 3 drought experts/ professors
- Representative of the vice president of strategic development

Other entities which are recommended to be a member of this council are as follows:

- Representative of mass media
- Universities

Duties:

- Holding multiple annual meetings (at least 6 meetings per year) for planning and reviewing activities and IDI achievements
- Identifying deficiencies and future needs in order to achieve IDI objectives
- Preparing and submitting recommendations to active entities in IDI activities
- Preparing a draft and required reports to submit to IDI vice chair and advisory committee
- Preparing the draft of annual budget

Planning Affairs

Regarding introducing IDI activities and establishing a permanent relation between all international and active entities in drought field, the planning center will be formed of 3 experts informed of managing and planning principles in cooperation with a workgroup of the members of advisory committee and executive – strategic council and will follow the below mentioned affairs:

- Communicating, preparing and exchanging information with international organizations, data center/ base of national and international institutes.
- Submitting scientific consultation through appropriate communications with various entities worldwide
• Planning and implementing different events and meetings affairs and exchanging ideas
• Purchasing, gathering and establishing a data base of documents and different drought projects, books, periodicals and publications for dissemination to various institutes around the world
• Publishing an annual journal, articles, periodicals and other technical publications if needed.
• Preparing and recommending annual plans and evaluating annual activities
• Preparing, recommending and following up the budget and financial balance

Informatics, Data Base and Training
• Conducting specialized trainings through holding training courses and workshops for active managers and experts in drought field at international level
• Conducting public trainings to increase public awareness of drought and the manner of each citizen’s contribution in combating drought programs
• Conducting special trainings for mass media
• Compiling data base, taking measures and informatics processes
• Analyzing, modifying and utilizing effective data in planning and implementing

International Affairs and Publications
Forming international affairs and publications is one of the essential requirements regarding dissemination of the achievements of international drought plan and also publication of brochures and pamphlets at international level. This committee is responsible of:
• Taking all measures in regard to edit, design, publish and disseminate of the drought brochures, newsletters, books, advertisers
• Identifying existing technical books relevant to drought and providing a book data base
• Cooperating with responsible authorities at national level regarding the technical books
• Supplying all required equipment of publishing
• Motivating experts, specialists and university professors in compiling drought technical books

Secretariat
International Drought Initiative (IDI) secretariat is at the Regional Center on Urban Water Management –Tehran (under the auspices of UNESCO) until being established in an appropriate place. Coordinating and implementing IDI plans are among important duties of secretariat. Secretariat duties are as follow:
• Coordinating and following up the regular and continuous trend of holding meetings, seminars and sessions
• Registering and documenting correspondences and minutes of meetings and received letters
• Providing cooperation with all relevant entities, governmental and private organizations
• Reviewing, monitoring, following up and evaluating the progress of projects and approved plans by advisory committee and executive – strategic council and reporting the state to IDI vice chair
• Publishing, distributing and notifying issued directives by IDI director to all relevant addresses
• Performing other duties assigned by higher authorities
• Launching, updating and monitoring on IDI website for utilizing in drought relevant subjects.
• Inviting relevant authorities of entities and organizations to visit secretariat, exchange ideas and using existing facilities to cooperate and consult in the relevant fields.
• Planning and coordinating communications with international entities and organizations.
1- Preparing a descriptive report on IDI
2- Preparing required documents to be used in UNESCO General Conference resolutions
3- Proposing the establishment of IDI by the Ministry of Energy, Iran to UNESCO General Conference
4- Proposing and approving IDI in the Intergovernmental Council of UNESCO-IHP
5- Preparing the initial brochure of IDI
6- Distributing the draft IDI brochure to national and international sources
7- Receiving and collecting feedbacks on the brochure
8- Determining the operational components of IDI
9- Correspondences with relevant entities for allocating budget
10- Arranging internal meetings
11- Holding advisory meetings with national and international resource persons
12- Uploading the IDI website
13- Holding the IHP Initiatives meeting in Tehran
14- Defining relevant projects within the region (documentary)
15- Preparing the country report and IDI role in Iran
16- Equipping the office
17- Holding a workshop with the aim of introducing IDI with the presence of national and international expertise
18- Defining research proposal priorities in the field of drought in Iran and the world
19- Preparing the data bank of active institutes in the field of drought at the national and international level