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to disasters

## Making Cities Resilient: My City is Getting Ready!

World Disaster Reduction Campaign 2010-2011

## Alexandria is getting ready!

### Alexandria City, Egypt



Population: 4,315,500 (2009)

Type of Hazard: *Municipal and Industrial wastes, vulnerability to sea level rise in restricted low lying areas (Floods)*

Alexandria Governorate is located along the Mediterranean coast of Egypt. The Governorate has a waterfront that extends for 80 km, from Abu-Qir Bay in the east to El Hammam in the west and includes a number of beaches and harbours. Alexandria is characterized by the irregular hills in the southern parts with an elevation from 0 to 40 meters above mean sea level, having an average altitude of about 5 meters above mean sea level and slopes towards the Mediterranean Sea in the northward.

Alexandria city is densely populated, and is of great economic and environmental significance; and it combines localities of intensive socio-economic activities and urbanized areas. Alexandria has always been the main summer destination in Egypt, attracting more than one million visitors during summer period. The last two decades, however, have witnessed an incomparable rate of tourism development, particularly along the Mediterranean coastal sector from Alexandria to the west.

Besides, Alexandria has a unique archeological and cultural heritage assets that are spanning various eras and constitute rich urban fabric and modern landmarks. The reconstruction of Bibliotheca Alexandrina, which attracts alone one million visitors every year, is positioning the city as a regional hub of knowledge, science and dialogue among cultures and civilizations.

Alexandria Governorate includes the major industry along the Mediterranean coast of Egypt, and the major commercial harbours and transportation infrastructure.

Alexandria receives high pollution loads discharged either directly or indirect from urban, agricultural and industrial discharge points. Land based sources of pollution are generated from maritime activities.

Lake Maryut, skirting the southern part of the city, is extensively polluted due to the discharge of untreated and primary treated sewage and industrial waste.

Another pressing challenge is the existence of 30 squatter settlements surrounding Alexandria where one-third of the population lives (1.2 million) lives with limited access to infrastructure and municipal service.

One of the likely impacts of climate change on Alexandria is the projected rising of sea level by the end of this century and the possible flooding of some restricted low land areas at the eastern side of the city. However mitigation measures have been considered to overcome these impacts.

### **Disaster Risk Reduction activities**

Alexandria Governorate recognizes the threats and challenges facing the city and the negative impacts on the socio-economic aspects. Therefore the city initiated several activities to overcome the multiple risks including:

1. The Maryut Lake project: to improve water quality and restore the eco-system in the lake.
2. Alexandria Integrated Coastal Zone Management Project: to provide a strategic framework and direct investments in order to reduce pollution on the Mediterranean sea.

The developed and being developed national strategies for the crisis management and disaster risk reduction and for the mitigation of climate change have considered the implementation and consideration of specific activities and measures to overcome the likely impacts of disasters; at regional levels the governorates have been integrated in the national strategies using the participatory approach.