

Global Assessment Report
on Disaster Risk Reduction



Background on the Arab Region in context of
disaster / climate change

RAED
(Arab Network for Environment and
Development)

2010

Background Arab Region in Context of Disaster/Climate Change

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The Arab Network for Environment and Development (RAED) is a regional network of NGOs and CBOs who are interested in environmental development. A growing concern and thus focus of the network and its member lies in the changing climate. Accordingly over the past few years RAED has become more and more aware of the urgent need to introduce measures to enable communities within the region to become more resilient and better prepared for their new-everyday realities. In fact, RAED is a pioneer in the Arab region for its work in civil society based action in disaster risk reduction.

Why civil society?

A right to know underlies the entire process of building resilience. It must be regarded in partnership with the right to participate. There is already good and reliable information of risks and vulnerabilities and more and more is becoming available. This information needs to be disseminated to the people who will benefit from it most. That is to say, those who live in the affected areas and who have the urgent need to be better prepared for the growing frequency and intensity of disaster in the region. Civil society organisations can work with all stakeholders from government authorities to academia to other non-state actors so that action plans will have the greatest affect on the wider community. It is essential that the communities have a sense of ownership in the process.

In order to ensure more effective achievements at a larger scale, cooperation between the implementing organisations and the government has been imperative. Such cooperation along with collaboration with the private sector also has the potential to assist in financial sustainability in the future. Therefore, members of this partnership work on the promotion of the synergy between all stakeholders in the various countries involved.

It has been recognised by stakeholders across the region that there needs to be a multi-level participatory approach that works at the local, national and regional levels in order to address and facilitate disaster risk reduction in local communities. Further, there is a need to incorporate DRR plans in the policies of the various ministries and to identify clear roles for civil society to perform.

“Arab Communities Adapting to Climate Change”

Since 2008, RAED has been implementing a comprehensive regional project, “Arab Communities Adapting to Climate Change” in 5 countries from the region. These countries are Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia. Disaster Risk Reduction is a key component of the project which has a 3 level approach: Regional, National and Local. The mixture of top-down and bottom-up systems in this project allows a decentralisation and more focus on local

governance, subsequently increasing the participation of member of the local community. As a result of the dialogue and participation of the communities and all relevant stakeholders in building safer and resilient communities is being achieved. The dialogue and partnership is also having an effect on the achievement of developments on different levels of legislation, public policy, risk assessment methods and systems. A number of the workshops organised within this project were supported by the UNISDR.

Regional-

The scope of the project encompasses 5 countries from the Arab region. Through exchange of knowledge and expertise the members in this partnership are conducting studies to produce applicable models for climate change risks. Further the communication and cooperation between NGOs working in this field as well as between academic institutions provides an engaged community working together towards a common end. It also applies more pressure on authorities and government institutions to create and maintain official disaster action plans.

National-

National Project Committees (NPC) have been established in each of the 5 countries participating. These NPCs have worked together to formulate National Project Strategies (NPS). These national strategies are being based on the results of the research and the studies proposing the adaption programs and activities that could be later executed by local communities, civil society and private sector.

Local-

The primary responsibility of the local committee for the project management (LPC) at the local level is the facilitation of local community dialogue on climate change and disaster risk reduction among all parties concerned by this difficult challenge and its consequences. Further, the LPC find mechanisms for applying recommendations from studies and moving towards an emphasis on continued dialogue with the different partners to promote the future sustainability of the project. Ultimately, it is the LPCs that are charged with the responsibility of supervising training programs and capacity building elements of the community, focusing on youth, women, farmers as well as others.

Local action plans (LAP) are also part of the project. Three “hotspots” have been chosen within each of the countries. These LAPs are being created with some proposals on pilot projects that could be implemented as a model for other to follow. Information of successful actions is being made available to all partners in order to be able to use it in the improvement of their respective projects. Part of the LAP will included demonstration activities for capacity building.

A key component of the project’s implementation is the running of awareness raising campaigns which are expected to reach hundreds of citizens through direct communications programs. In

order to monitor the movement and ensure its success, there indicators against which this success can be measured in the form of national and local reports. These reports provide comparable indicators to assess the success of the project.

Outputs-

Each country will produce a national DRR report. These reports will discuss early warning and emergency preparedness in the 3 selected hotspots that are under risk in of the selected countries.

National strategies are being developed. Recommendations for legislation and public policy development base on the outcomes and studies conducted in the target countries that include adaptation programs and activities required. There will be at least 3 local action plans implemented in the 3 selected hotspots of each country areas.

Using vulnerability assessments and building on knowledge in the science community is essential. However applying this to the everyday context is important so that the people most affected will be better equipped to cope with disasters both before and after.

The identification of hotspots through the use of assessment reports is a key activity of the project. RAED in partnership with the Arab Academy of Science, Technology and Maritime Transports (AASTMT) is implementing a South-South Cooperation initiative under the World Bank. This project builds on studies from the AASTMT in identifying areas of particular risk in Egypt, Tunisia and Djibouti and will then RAED is responsible for implementing trainings in each of the identified areas.

Ultimately civil society in the participating countries will be strengthened and more prepared to be engaged the policy and decision making process through their experience in this project. The project is projected to conclude in 2012 at which point it is assumed that the experiences and the development of capacities in DRR field will have been significantly improved in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia. In so much, the last effects of the project will endure and shape DRR agenda of these countries.