



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC



National Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction “Assessing and Managing Risks in Lebanon”

Grand Serail, 17-18 October 2012

1. Background

Disaster losses are on the rise with grave consequences for the survival, dignity and livelihoods of people, in particular the poorest population. Disasters also severely affect investments, seriously reducing years of development efforts. A recent World Bank/UN report “Natural Hazards, UnNatural Disasters: the economics of effective prevention” estimates that storms, floods, earthquakes and droughts caused more than 3.3 million deaths and US\$2.3 trillion in damage between 1970 and 2010. Looking ahead, growing cities and a changing climate will further shape disaster risks. The number of people exposed to storms and earthquakes in large cities could double to 1.5 billion by 2050. Furthermore, by the turn of the century, even without climate change, damages from weather-related hazards are expected to triple to US\$185 billion annually. Despite the growing understanding of the importance of disaster risk reduction and increased disaster response capacities, the application of measures to reduce risk of disasters, and particularly related management and preparedness arrangements, continues to pose a global challenge.

Lebanon is not far from these realities, as it is subject to a wide range of natural hazards. The largest single disaster threat is that of a severe earthquake and associated Tsunami, due to tectonic fault lines across West Asia and in the Mediterranean Sea. In addition, typical smaller-scale disasters include floods, forest fires, land-slides and drought. The vulnerability of the Lebanese population to both large and small-scale disaster threats is compounded by the following factors:

- Limited presence of the government ministries in peripheral regions;
- Limited effectiveness of the state regulatory frameworks in key sectors;
- Haphazard housing and unchecked urban expansion;
- Lack of enforcement of building codes;
- Lack of implementation of regulation of land use; and
- A range of environmental factors.

Disaster Risk Reduction is one of the government priorities in Lebanon, with more emphasis on post-disaster response. The establishment of appropriate policy frameworks and strategies on disaster management and risk reduction, and the improvement of coordination mechanisms however require further support in Lebanon.

Within this context, the National Council for Scientific Research (CNRS), in partnership with the United Nations, are organizing a conference on “Assessing and Managing Risks

in Lebanon” to promote a strategic approach to address vulnerabilities and to reduce risks.

2. Aim and Objectives of the conference

The conference will aim to promote a common understanding of the risks which Lebanon currently faces, and to discuss practical strategies to strengthen resilience and to reduce vulnerabilities. In particular, the workshop will seek to:

- a) To provide an overview of key natural and man-made risks in Lebanon;
- b) To share experiences from other countries faced with similar challenges;
- c) To initiate a national Disaster Risk Reduction Platform.

3. Targeted audience

Given the multidimensional nature of disaster risk reduction, the conference will aim to bring together experts, practitioners, and decision makers from a wide range of fields and disciplines. In particular, they will include representatives from the Government, the Parliament, local authorities, academia, scientific institutions, international and local non-governmental organisations, the United Nations, as well as the media.

Day 1 : Wednesday 17 October 2012	
10:00 –10:45	Opening and Welcome address <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Secretary-General of CNRS Lebanon, Mouïñ Hamzé – Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction, Margareta Wahlström – United Nations Resident Coordinator in Lebanon, Robert Watkins – His Excellency the President of the Council of Ministers, Najib Mikati
10:45 –11:00	Coffee Break
11:00 –11:45	Keynote –Badaoui Rouhban , Director, Section for Disaster Reduction, UNESCO-Paris: Two Decades in Disaster Risk Management – A Lifetime Experience
11:45 –13:30	Overview of Key Disaster Risks In Lebanon <i>This session will provide an overview of Lebanon’s exposure to catastrophic events. The selected themes are considered as most relevant in the Lebanese environment.</i> <u>Chair: Mouïñ Hamzé, Secretary-General of CNRS-Lebanon</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Alex Sursock, Director Geophysical Research Center, CNRSL: Earthquakes, Tsunamis and other Geological Extreme Events. – Talal Darwish, Director Remote Sensing Center, CNRSL: Meteorological Extreme Events and Climate Change – Bilal Nsouli, Director Lebanese Atomic Energy Commission, CNRSL: Pollution, Chemical and Nuclear Accidents. – Fadi Hamdan, Risk Assessment National Expert, UNDP: Lebanon National Risk Profile <u>Rapporteur: Fadi Hamdan</u>
13:30– 14:30	Lunch Break
14:30 - 16:30	Enhancing National Action on Disaster Risk Reduction: Strategies and Legislations <i>This session will focus on key policy and legislative issues to strengthen disaster risk reduction in Lebanon, and discuss current initiatives to reduce vulnerabilities in the country, at the national and local levels. The session will also draw on international good practices in this area.</i> <u>Chair: Mohammad Kabbani, Member of Parliament, Head of the Public Works and Transport Parliamentary Committee</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Luna Abu-Swaireh, Arab States Office, UNISDR: Institutionalization of DRR and setting up national coordination mechanisms.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Mohammad Kabbani, MP: Legislation on the establishment of national agency for DRR – Elias Bsaibes, President of the Order of Engineers, Beirut: The Public Safety Decree and the Building code – Ibrahim Chahrour, Director of Planning and Programming Division, Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR): Land use planning in the light of Risk Management Strategies – Luca Rossi, Italian Civil Protection: Italy's experience in boosting capacities and coordination for DRR <p><u>Rapporteur: Ibrahim Chahrour</u></p>
--	--

Day 2 : Thursday 18 October 2012	
9:30 – 11:30	<p>Effective Use of Knowledge and Research to Develop an Integrated Agenda for Disaster Risk Reduction (Part I)</p> <p><i>This session will explore the experiences of other countries in assessing risks and in improving preparedness to anticipate and/or respond to disasters.</i></p> <p><u>Chair: Badaoui Rohban,</u> Director, Section for Disaster Reduction, UNESCO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Nicole Keller, Senior Coordinator, International Relations and Communication, Global Earthquake Model (GEM Foundation): From global to urban, working together to assess seismic risk – Mohamed BELAZOUGUI, Director of Algeria National Center on Applied Research for Earthquake Resilient Engineering: The Algerian Experience – Khaled Abou Aisheh, Director of Disaster Risk Management Unit, Aqaba, Jordan: Integrated Approach to Risk Reduction at the Local Level in Aqaba – Elias Tawil, Director of Urban Planning Department, Ministry of Public Works and Transport: Urban Development in Lebanon and DRR <p>Rapporteur: Muhsin Rahhal</p>
11:30 –11:45	<i>Coffee Break</i>
11:45 –13:30	<p>Effective Use of Knowledge and Research to Develop an Integrated Agenda for Disaster Risk Reduction (Part II)</p> <p><u>Chair: Pierpaolo Compostrini,</u> Director of CORILA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Fadia Kiwan, Director of Political Sciences Institute, USJ : Gender dimensions of disaster risk reduction in Lebanon – Stephane Cartier, Sociologist, Institut des Sciences de la Terre (Université Joseph Fourier, Grenoble, France) and Project LiBRIS

	<p>(LIBan RISques): Social Aspects in Managing Risks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Shigeo Takahashi, President of the Port and Airport Institute: The Japanese Experience – Pierpaolo Campostrini, Director of CORILA (Consortium for Coordination of Research Activities Concerning the Venice Lagoon System): Water and risk, resilience of coastal areas and protection of infrastructure. <p>Rapporteur: Alex Sursock</p>
13:30– 14:30	Lunch Break
14:30 –16:00	<p>Synthesis and Conclusions</p> <p><i>Aim is to explore development of a comprehensive and coordinated approach for Lebanon towards a sustainable development agenda that is risk-sensitive and aligned with global targets on RIO+20, MDGs and plans for global DRR framework after 2015.</i></p> <p>Chair: <u>Margareta Wahlström, UNISDR</u></p> <p>Rapporteurs presentations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Fadi Hamdan – Ibrahim Chahrour – Muhsin Rahhal – Alex Sursock <p>Concluding Remarks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Margareta Wahlström, UNISDR – Luca Renda, UNDP – Civil Defense, Ministry of Interior and Municipalities – Prime Minister’s Office – Alex Sursock, CNRSL