

National Consultation on Post-2015 Framework on DRR

Lebanon, 4 June 2012

UNISDR Regional Office for Arab States held a national consultation meeting with Lebanese stakeholders (HFA national committee) on the post-2015 global framework for DRR. The meeting was hosted and co-organized in collaboration with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) – Disaster Risk Management Unit at the Presidency of the Council of Ministers in the Grand Serail.

UNISDR introduced the objectives of the consultation, the road map to 2015 and reviewed achievements and lessons learnt from implementing HFA to date. The consultation was designed in an informal manner and concise to address the key issues viewed by Lebanon as essential to advance DRR nationally and locally.

Participants were keen on highlighting key challenges and bottle necks in implementing current DRR framework (HFA) and its priorities for action and emphasized that in order to ensure that post-2015 will bring positive change, the HFA implementation challenges need to be remedied.

These challenges evolved around improved coordination across national institutions and between national and local levels as well as increased investment financially and technically in DRR in all sectoral ministries. The lack of a deep understanding of the linkage between DRR, development and planning often hampered DRR progress as being viewed from response and relief angles only rather than a development strategy.

Key points for consideration:

- In order to develop a post-HFA framework and vision, we need to understand the requirements and level of implementation of the current HFA.
- Financial constraints impede progress on DRR and lead to negative impacts on poverty reduction strategies.
- The role of the civil society is critical in supporting sustainable development and the private sector is a leading force in this area and both groups of actors need to be engaged in DRR agenda.
- The government has clear commitment and planning process for DRR but implementation is very slow leading to the need to boost national and local capacities and resources for DRR implementation.
- In Lebanon, the positive side of emerging from long years of wars and conflicts is social solidarity which should be considered as key element in DRR.

- There is no continuity or follow up on the recommendations made through DRR actions, policies and studies. Clear follow-up mechanism needed.
- Enforcement of laws, orders, decrees related to DRR is a must. For example, the Lebanese safety codes exist but there is no follow up or a team of expert checking if these codes are being applied.
- The government has the duty to request technical inspections conforming to the safety codes. In addition, there should be communication between the different agencies, ministries and organizations based on the area of specialization of each agency, ministry or organization. For example, inspectors from the ministry of Health communicating with inspectors from the ministry of Environment.
- Post-HFA should be a binding agreement to participating countries in order for the government to feel the obligation to fulfill it. An example of such an agreement is CEDAW (Convention against Women Discrimination) which the Lebanese government signed in 1995. This made Lebanon abide by the agreement by amending the existing laws. CEDAW was mentioned in the Prime Minister Inauguration speech whereas DRR was not mentioned because the legal commitment is missing.
- DRR should be made a priority for mainstreaming in all sectors and cross-cutting agenda. To deal with DRR mainstreaming as gender-mainstreaming was addressed will help push the agenda.
- Current national budget does not include a percentage for DRR. There should be a budget in the Ministries specifically for DRR. It can be a percentage of the ministry's budget or a specific lump sum amount. Currently the ministries have in their budget money that they can use for prevention and emergencies but it is not specifically mentioned for disasters. In addition, there should be a way to make the recommendations binding in order to move forward.
- Need to ensure a National Focal Point for DRR who links to DRR focal points of the ministries with clear ToR on expectations from coordination and information sharing as well as working modalities and commitments.
- The need for an Emergency Committee becomes more evident after the occurrence of a disaster like the latest Carpet factory fire. We need to build a culture of safety.