

**Minutes
of the
3rd Meeting of the MENA DRR Network
(Hotel Sofitel Maadi, Cairo, 5 December 2013)**

UNISDR convened the third meeting of the MENA DRR Network gathering regional agencies gathered in MENA region for information exchange and joint planning of DRR related activities in the region.

Following the welcome words of UNISDR ROAS (Lars Bernd), participants introduced themselves shortly and adopted the agenda of the meeting.

The group discussed the following issues:

Progress made from the last meeting

Adoption of **TORs for MENA DRR Network** (UNISDR): Participants appreciated receiving the latest version integrating Network members comment made at the last MENA DRR Network meeting. For the final adoption of the TORs, UNISDR ROAS (Lars Bernd) will circulate again the draft so that participants that have not done so can still provide further final comments. UNISDR will circulate the final TOR version with the group.

Report of the Post-2015 framework for DRR inter-agency consultation (held on 23 October 2013): Agencies decided to disseminate the consultation report among participating agencies, but not on the UNISDR hosted preventionweb.net public HFA2 website. Recommendations can thus inform agencies engaged in developing HFA2, but avoid possible misunderstandings with governments due to some remarks, which may be misinterpreted. UNISDR was asked to share the report once more to open for a final round of inputs before internal publication by 19 December 2013.

“Children in a Changing Climate Coalition”: UNICEF and other partners in the CCCC plan to undertake HFA2 consultations with children. The consultations will include two key questions, (1) what are the affecting factors for DRR, and (2), what would be a message which children could give to their government on disaster risk. UNICEF seeks funding to support this initiative.

Feedback from implementation of recent regional DRR initiatives

UNISDR with participating agencies informed about the LAS/UNISDR/UNDP Workshop **“Implementation of the Arab Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction and Developing an Arab position on the post-2015 framework on disaster risk reduction “HFA2”**. The workshop took place in Cairo, from 24 to 25 November 2013.

Participating agencies reacted to the workshop in raising a few critical issues. One of them was the question who will implement the Arab Strategy for DRR and who can be taken accountable for it. Another concern was that there was only little room for agencies to raise their voices at the workshop. At same time reference was made to the UNISDR ROAS convened consultation of agencies on earlier version of the document.

On the positive side, it was pointed out as encouraging that decision-makers from various countries of the Arab League were present. Yet, it was questioned how workshop participants will bring the debate on the HFA to their respective country, if at all.

Further remarks were made that internal communication and information sharing within LAS is rather weak, which is a challenge for all stakeholders.

UNISDR informed that agencies can still provide inputs to the implementation plan of the Arab Strategy and referred in this regard to its email sharing the e-version of the document. Agencies are invited to comment by 13 December 2013 at the latest.

WHO Expert consultation for development of a **Masters Curriculum framework for Disaster Risk Management:**

WHO informed about the ongoing consultation process for the drafting of a curriculum framework which will focus on health from a multi-sectoral perspective. The whole initiative targets at different actors, such as the Civil Defence but also Ministries (e.g. Ministry of Environment). Based on the curriculum framework, the WHO plans to implement training programmes on DRM at country level. The objective is to arrive at a standardised training for the health sector. This training will include disaster management and its humanitarian and development dimension. The consultation will lead to health training by King Saud University in Saudi Arabia with other universities from outside also being involved.

WB workshop on DRR and the “Natural Disasters in MENA region: A regional overview” publication: The World Bank organised a regional DRR workshop in Jeddah on 17-18 November. It was a high level meeting as several Deputy Ministers participated there. The main content of the workshop was to exchange on DRM experiences from within and outside the Arab region and to final comment on a new report about the DRR in MENA region, which benefited from UNISDR and UNDP comments. The WB will share it with the MENA DRR Network.

ISDR Agencies update: past-present-planned DRR related activities

IOM

IOM produced a new video to raise awareness on sea level rise in the Nile delta in Egypt. This is in the framework of a project to assess the impact of sea-level rise on populations and IDPs at Egypt’s North Coast (Abu-Kir). The project includes capacity building and the setting up of a GIS-based system for risk assessment. The work has been carried out in partnership with CEDARE. IOM will share the link to the video – available in Arabic and later in English - with Network members.

OCHA

OCHA informed that IFRC plans to do a new study on national laws for emergencies (relief law). In this context, a regional workshop on “Strengthening the Facilitation and Regulation of International Humanitarian Response in the MENA Region” will be held 19-20 December 2013 in Qatar.

Save the Children

Save the Children is active on ‘DRR education’ in Lebanon in cooperation with UNICEF and SDC. The main counterpart is the Ministry of Education with whom it is planned to develop a DRR strategy on DRR education. Save the children also collaborates with the LAS to mainstream DRR in children issues as well as in health system questions.

Save the Children plans having DRR and climate change adaptation training workshops for their staff in 2014 and invited agencies to also send their staff as participants or resource persons.

Save the Children also informed that it has firmly integrated DRR in their country programmes. Any new project proposal should have an element on DRR.

UNICEF

UNICEF will revisit their existing DRR strategy at regional level. Resilience issues are at the core. Further, the DRR strategy will be translated into an action plan.

UNICEF does currently fund-raising for a regional programme on youth, DRR and resilience. Also the issue climate change adaptation will play a major role in particular the development of practical tools.

UNISDR

UNISDR informed about the up-coming Regional Platform. It will be held next year in Sharm-el-Sheikh. The date is not yet clear, but, it is planned for the first half of the year 2014. Agencies of the MENA DRR Network are encouraged to get engaged in the conference. For this, UNISDR invited agencies to play a stronger role in organising side-events and sponsoring delegates including resource persons to attend the conference and its side events. In particular, UNISDR encouraged agencies to contribute by organising their stakeholder events, e.g. on NGOs for DRR. UNISDR invited agencies to share any ideas for their participation and contribution. UNISDR will in turn provide more details once the dates are fixed.

WFP

The WFP plans to improve risk analysis in selected countries, such as Yemen, Egypt, etc. The risk analysis is linked also with the debate on climate change.

Further, WFP is interested to develop guidance notes on “food security and DRR”.

WHO

As a whole, DRR has become a priority issue within the agency. DRR issues are well integrated in the WHO programming.

In particular, the WHO is engaged with Risk Assessments in the health sector. The focus is on the quality improvement of those assessments. For this, appropriate indicators are essential.

Discussion on joint ISDR system agency action in selected MENA focus countries

On UNISDR’s invitation, UNICEF presented the idea on joint ISDR system agency actions in MENA region. Agencies agreed that a mapping exercise would help to understand which agency is doing what, and to identify needs, interests, gaps and the agencies’ agendas. This is essential to find windows for opportunities of collaboration. Network members remarked that joint missions may create synergies between agencies in the region and improve information exchange and impact on DRR. In addition, it would be useful to know what the governments’ initiatives are in order to build up further cooperation.

UNISDR suggested selecting three countries in the region for targeted joint support. This could at best be linked to new UNDAF roll out processes and/or new or on-going agency programmes to provide DRR support in various sectors according to agency’s comparative advantage and engagement at national and local level. This initiative could thus also be linked to the UN Joint Plan of Action on DRR for Resilience. It would however be involving fully INGOs.

UNISDR also suggested providing joint agency training on how to integrate DRR, Environmental sustainability and climate change into UNDAFs and referred in this regard to on-going discussions with the UNRCO in Tunisia. Interested agencies should contact UNISDR.

With regard to joint support, it was pointed out that some initiatives would be of more regional matter, as the support to the League of Arab States and implementation of the Arab Strategy for

DRR 2020. OCHA, UNICEF and WFP raised their interest to focus on Iraq and Yemen. UNISDR suggested a focus on one country in each sub-region (Maghreb: Algeria, Mashrek: Sudan?, and Gulf).

UNISDR suggested putting further research analysis into this question (development of a “concept note”).

Wrap-up and next steps

UNISDR summarised the major issues of discussion and participants conclude as next steps to focus on:

- Compendium of agency profiles for publication: Those agencies which have not done so yet, are asked to submit their DRR profile by first week of January 2014.
- Agencies to share further information on above mentioned initiatives as appropriate with the Network or UNISDR for on-ward distribution (incl. comments to implementation plan of Arab Strategy for DRR).
- UNISDR to prepare concept note on joint MENA DRR Network actions at national/local and regional level.
- UNISDR to share again report of inter-agency HFA2 consultation and TOR of the Network and agencies to provide final comments in track changes by Friday, 13 December 2013 for finalisation and sharing with members.

With UNISDR as convener, the next meeting is planned in the first half of 2014. The location will be discussed within the Network. Some agencies suggested moving the meeting to one of the MENA countries and linking it to onsite joint support to the UN country team and national partners.

Annex: Participants List

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CS/LB, 18 Dec 2013