

**5<sup>th</sup> meeting of the  
MENA DRR Network  
(Kempinski Hotel Amman, 3 June 2014)**

**- Minutes -**

UNISDR welcomed participants to the MENA DRR Network meeting, which was organized back-to-back to the MENA Inter-Agency Emergency Preparedness and Response Network for MENA (MENA Group) meeting in Amman and benefited from Danish Refugee Council's kind financial contribution for arranging full equipped meeting room and coffee-break.

Following a round of introductions, the members welcomed participation of new representatives for FAO (Mr. Francesco Del Re), WFP (Mr. Alain Olive) and World Vision (Ms. Elsa Carnaby). The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, Cooperation Office Jordan, also participated through Mr. Jürg Zumstein and Mr. Nayef Khouri.

The draft agenda was adopted as final and main discussion points and recommendations can be summarized as follows:

**1) Update on progress towards the Third World Conference on DRR and adoption of the Post-2015 Framework for DRR (UNISDR)**

UNISDR updated on preparations for the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (Sendai, 14-18 March 2015). Lars Bernd's presentation focused on the various milestones "towards Sendai", in particular Regional Platform meetings and the forthcoming two sessions of the Preparatory Committee for the World Conference, with the first taking place 14-15 July in Geneva. UNISDR pointed out the formal process, which is being engaged to arrive at a post-2015 framework for DRR with related modalities and deadlines for participation by various governmental and non-governmental actors and international organisations. This introduction paved the way for the subsequent presentation of progress towards the holding of the 2nd Arab Conference for DRR. As UNISDR pointed out, the Arab Regional Platform is part and parcel of the global approach for multi-stakeholder, multi-sector and multi-level participation to arrive at the most appropriate post-2015 framework for DRR (for details, please access the annexed PPT).

**2) Update on progress on preparation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Arab Conference for DRR/ 2<sup>nd</sup> Arab Regional Platform**

UNISDR briefed on progress in preparing for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Arab Conference for DRR, including the recently announced postponement of the event to 14-16 September 2014 (the venue remains Sharm-el-Sheikh, Egypt). As part of the briefing and bearing in mind that less than 50% of this MENA DRR Network meeting participants attended either the previous Arab Regional Platform or other Global or Regional Platform events, Lars Bernd highlighted the importance of Regional Platforms in the ISDR set up to assess regional progress and combine efforts for DRR. UNISDR briefly presented Regional Platform set ups and the current draft agenda for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Arab Regional Platform.

Participants then went through the UNISDR prepared draft table summarising status of indicated contributions by MENA DRR Network members to the Regional Platform. These refer to the organisation of sessions (main sessions, special sessions, side events, preparatory meetings, etc.), to contributions to fund delegates' participation and/or organisation of booths for the DRR exhibition. (For details, please access MENA DRR Network work space on [preventionweb.net](http://preventionweb.net)).

Kathlyn Sumaylo of UNICEF led through the Children in a Changing Climate organised session on Youth perceptions and recommendations for DRR and the post-2015 framework for DRR to illustrate how Network members can contribute substantively to the event.

UNISDR asked agencies interested in contributing to the event to:

1. Review in more depth the UNISDR compiled “Overview of agency contribution to the Regional Platform” and to signal any necessary changes and updates to the Secretariat
2. Prepare session outlines following the UNISDR template shared at the last MENA DRR Network meeting and to submit them by 30 June 2014 (draft one-page outline)
3. Register their delegation on the conference website and request their partners to do the same for planning purposes:  
<http://www.preventionweb.net/acdrr/2014/register/form/register>
4. Indicate any other contributions, e.g. funding of delegates, to Lars Bernd.

Since the agenda for the 2nd Regional Arab Platform is not yet finalized, Soso Bagashvili of Save the Children International (SCI) asked to consider incorporating the additional areas where SCI can contribute to the Regional Platform, such as: 1. Mainstreaming Child-centred DRR in the national health, protection and education policies and plans in the Arab States; 2. DRR Programming in conflict settings (oPt). Session outlines as per UNISDR template will be provided

Participants pointed out, the need to receive a final concept note and a draft agenda for the meeting - in particular to enable them to obtain further internal and external support and contribution to the agenda and funding of the event.

In addition, Mark Choonoo (UNICEF) requested UNISDR and the League of Arab States to establish at the Regional Platform the link to the Arab Strategy for DRR 2020 implementation plan, to which several agencies provided comments in November 2013.

UNICEF also stressed the importance to focus in the Regional Platform agenda on the issue of water security and water stress, with appropriate action required to alleviate related conflict potential through DRR. UNISDR asked WFP/FAO and ACF to consider these aspects in their session on drought, food (in)security and water scarcity, aspect which should also inform other sessions related to climate change and organised by other partners.

Suggested links to better understand the role of Regional Platforms and organisation of similar events in Arab States and elsewhere:

<http://www.unisdr.org/we/coordinate/regional-platforms>

<http://www.preventionweb.net/english/hyogo/regional/key-events/>

### **3) Update on IFRC's activities and plans**

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Ramzi Saliba of IFRC's MENA Zone Office in Beirut referred in his presentation to recent IFRC initiatives including the:

1. **Urban DRR/DM workshop held in December in Beirut**
2. **Urban DRR pilot study launched in January 2014 in Tehran, Iran**

The study is one of a series of five studies carried out at global level to highlight challenges and provide an operational framework for DRR in major cities on each continent. Preliminary findings for Tehran suggested the need to continue with awareness-raising and public education on DRR. The final study is expected in October 2014. The report will be compiled with those of the remaining 4 studies leading to a global document.

**3. Mapping of IFRC DRR and climate change related projects in MENA Zone**

This exercise allowed gathering first hand information of what IFRC and national Red Cross/ Red Crescent societies in MENA region have accomplished in terms of support to disaster risk reduction, resilience, and National Society preparedness and capacity building. Ramzi Saliba pointed out that more detailed country information can be obtained from him on request.

**4. IFRC's Community Safety and Resilience Framework to be adopted in 2014**

**5. Plans to collect MENA National Societies key messages with regards to "SRSR Proposed Elements for Consideration in the Post-2015 Framework for DRR":**

Updated key messages for IFRC regarding the Post-2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction have been developed through consultations with National Societies across the world and will be shared during upcoming regional platforms.

Ramzi Saliba concluded his presentation with two suggestions to MENA DRR Network members to carry out a 1. **Mapping of institutions in Arab States engaged in DRR/ DRM** and to 2. **Set up a database of shared human, physical and technical resources for DRR/DRM in Arab States.**

In this regard, he also referred to the UNISDR endeavor to collect agency profiles for an agency compendium on DRR, work which should continue and be finalized through agency input. UNISDR pointed out that several agencies have still not submitted their agency profiles.

IFRC's suggestions for mapping exercises were appreciated by other MENA DRR Network members. UNISDR referred to information available already on [preventionweb.net](http://preventionweb.net), stressing that this could very well be enhanced by such an initiative. At the same time several agencies pointed out the challenges to establish such databases and to maintain them, which require full agency buy-in.

IFRC suggested sharing a template and further define the objective and approach of the proposed initiative. This will benefit from support by Save the Children and UNISDR. It was agreed to request further feedback by other MENA DRR Network members, who could not participate in the meeting, whether the Network should take these suggestion up.

**5) Agency updates**

Due to the limit time, it was decided to skip this agenda item. Agencies were invited to share information by email. The following includes submissions made after the meeting:

- **WFP Regional Bureau for Middle East, North Africa, Eastern Europe and Central Asia (OMC)** is currently preparing a strategy to strengthen its engagement in Disaster Risk Reduction aspects for supporting country offices in the region, partners and government services to effectively manage climate related risks to food security and resilience in the region. The aim of this effort is to link disaster risk reduction (including early warning and preparedness) and climate change adaptation approaches to improve WFP food assistance in countries facing recurrent shocks and crises.

- To advance this area of work, WFP is building its internal capacity and developing new tools to inform better programming, part of this includes a workshop on 'operationalizing resilience' organized in June 2014.
- **SCI Middle East Eurasia Regional Office** is currently working on the phase two of the Child-centred DRR (CCDDR) for LAS proposal. That will address integrating CCDDR in the national health, protection and education policies and plans in three pilot LAS member states by using the CCDDR Guidelines and tools developed under the previous phase of the project.

#### **6) Consultation on OCHA position paper on HFA2 related to preparedness**

OCHA Regional Office for MENA facilitated an exchanged on how to address preparedness in the "HFA2" to contribute and inform the related inter-governmental consultations.

OCHA developed a position paper on HFA2 globally that will be discussed during regional consultations. OCHA is also launching a new book entitled "Saving life today and tomorrow". A summary of the book is under translation into Arabic.

OCHA ROMENA developed the following three questions, which served discussions:

- 1) What are the preparedness priorities that will help National authorities and UN agencies in building up resilience programmes.
- 2) What are the requirements and the mechanisms to build effective preparedness partnerships with National authorities and regional and local stakeholders?
- 3) What are the methods and procedures to promote preparedness for response programmes to build resilience;

#### **The following observations were raised during the meeting;**

- It was noted that the concept of preparedness might not be clear for national authorities in the region as there are many national authorities' partners involved in disaster management. Further, there is also no clear picture on structures responsible for national disaster management. Therefore, feedback expected from national partners might not be accurate and relevant. It was suggested to share good practices from other regions that might help consultations.
- Preparedness is different from the response in many aspects. Preparedness depends on the country context, will and capacity. Therefore, the level of national awareness has to be taking into consideration and capacity-building activities have to be developed and delivered.
- Participants recommended narrowing down the above-mentioned questions.
- OCHA will develop indicators, revise the questions and share the results with international partners.
- The meeting recommended reviewing the national progress reports on HFA through PreventionWeb in order to measure progress in Disaster risk Management including preparedness: <http://www.preventionweb.net/english/hyogo/progress/>

MENA DRR Network members agreed to establish a small group of volunteers to help OCHA to review its position paper on HFA2. WFP, UNICEF and UNFPA volunteered to be part of this small group. OCHA will lead the group to revise the questions based on HFA priority 2 and 5, and to develop the way forward for the preparedness session at the forthcoming Regional Platform.

## **7) Next Steps**

It was decided that the next MENA DRR Network meeting will take place at the 2nd Arab Conference on DRR between 14 and 16 September 2014 in Sharm-el-Sheikh, Egypt. The meeting will be linked to a stakeholder consultation on the UN Plan of Action on DRR for Resilience and roll-out in Arab States. UNISDR asked participants to review the UN Plan presented at the 2nd MENA DRR Network meeting in October 2013 and available at:

<http://www.preventionweb.net/english/professional/publications/v.php?id=33703>

Lars Bernd, UNISDR, July 2014