



## Private Sector Workshop 2014

### Disaster Risk Reduction for the Private Sector in Lebanon

#### Concept Note

#### 1. Background

Exposure of people and assets to disasters increased in the past decade in all countries, leading to new risks and an increase in economic losses. Direct losses from disasters between 2000 and 2013 are estimated at USD 2.5 trillion, impacting developed and developing economies substantially. With the private sector contributing to between 70-85% of capital investment globally, private sector engagement in resilience and disaster risk reduction is vital.

Lebanon is subjected to a range of natural hazards, and it is critical for the country to be adequately prepared to respond to such disasters. Therefore, in 2009 the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) supported a 'Strengthening DRM Capacities in Lebanon' project that aims to help the Lebanese government develop its disaster management and corresponding risk reduction strategy. In this context, this project was launched and aimed to help the Lebanese Government develop its disaster management and corresponding risk reduction strategy, and aiming at increasing the capacity of all stakeholders including the private sector.

Disasters can cause high economic and human losses and can severely impact private and public firms. Small businesses are often particularly affected by disasters, and despite these large impacts on businesses, disaster risks are not well accounted for by the private sector in Lebanon. Many firms in the Arab region have developed business continuity plans to mitigate damage to operations and image when disasters hit. While business continuity plans are effective solutions to respond to disasters, proactive strategies to reduce the risk of disasters are essential to ensure long-term competitiveness and sustainability.

Corporations can contribute significantly to local and national resilience and disaster risk reduction by identifying risks and investing in human, technical and financial resources to reduce them and ensure resiliency of operations. Investing in disaster risk reduction offers a triple return by ensuring business continuity, safeguarding long-term investments, and protecting employees, their families, communities and environments.

To ensure sustainable economic growth in Lebanon, disaster risk reduction needs to be integrated in standard business solutions, together with measures to adapt to climate change variability and economic challenges. Many firms around the world have started to integrate disaster risk reduction in their business plans. Studies show that for every US\$1 invested in resilience and prevention, between US\$4 and US\$7 are saved in response.<sup>1</sup>

UNISDR's Disaster Risk Reduction Private Sector Partnership (DRR-PSP) works with the private sector and promotes public private partnerships to strengthen resilience and enhance disaster risk reduction. Further, the Business Partnerships Team is mobilizing action among businesses and industry and catalyses Public Private Partnerships to strengthen resilience and reduce the risks of disasters.

<sup>1</sup>California Emergency Management Agency/UN Development Programme



## 2. Workshop Objectives and Expected Outcomes

*Mainstreaming disaster risk reduction and resilience in the Lebanese private sector through risk-sensitive investments, resilient business strategies and building a local DRR-PSP group.*

### i. Introducing the International Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction

- Link of disaster risk reduction and sustainable development
- Hyogo Framework for Action
- Development of a new international framework on Disaster Risk Reduction

### ii. Role of the private sector in disaster risk reduction and resilience

- The importance of the private sector in DRR and resilience
- The business case for DRR and resilience
- Private sector proposals for the post-2015 framework of disaster risk reduction – the Five Private Sector Visions
- UNISDR's DRR-PSP
- Proposal to build a national DRR-PSP group
- The role of the private sector towards resilient cities

### iii. Mainstreaming disaster risk reduction and resilience in the Lebanese private sector

- The right policy and regulatory environment
- Building Public–Private Partnerships
- Case studies of successful business strategies
- International best practices in Business Continuity Management plans

## 3. Target audience

- Leading business syndicates and associations
- Chambers of commerce
- Lebanese businesses including SMEs