

Support Action for Strengthening PAlestine capabilities for seismic Risk Mitigation SASPARM 2.0

Deliverable DE1

**“Summary of the focus group meetings with stakeholders
and risk policy experts”**



Table of contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| 1. Background | 3 |
| 2. The Project Goal and Main Targets | 3 |
| 3. Distribution of the questionnaires and collecting the data: Methodology..... | 3 |
| 4. Meetings with stakeholders..... | 4 |
| 5. Synthesis of discussions | 6 |
| 6. Summary of the views and discussions with the different stakeholders:..... | 6 |
| Table 1 | 9 |
| Appendices | 14 |
| Appendix 1: Questionnaire..... | 14 |
| Appendix 2: Selected Photos During the Meetings and Workshops..... | 14 |



1. Background

In Palestine (the occupied Palestinian territories - oPt) there are a number of challenges in the field of disaster risk management (DRM), notably natural hazards such as earthquakes, floods, desertification, and droughts. Seismological studies show that there is a high probability of damaging earthquakes occurring in the region.

Capacities for DRM are generally weak at all levels in most of the countries in the region, but they are especially low in the oPt. This is due to the unique circumstances of the Palestinian situation. The effects of occupation upon sustainable development in the oPt, lack of resources, historical lack of building codes and land use planning as well as very weak institutional capacities all lead to this situation of very low DRM capacities.

Palestinian stakeholders, governmental (GO) and non-governmental (NGO) institutions, students and practitioners have shown a huge interest in the SASPARM activities and their outcomes. In addition, a new Seismic Building Code has been recently introduced in Palestine. Within this context, the need for prevention in the field of seismic risk is strongly required and this encouraged the same Consortium (UPDRRC, EUCENTRE and IUSS) to develop a successor project in seismic risk mitigation post-SASPARM, named SASPARM 2.0.

2. The Project Goal and Main Targets

The project goal is to create a web portal where different users (students, citizens, practitioners, GO and NGO stakeholders) will be able to input and manage data on buildings, with increasing levels of detail, and obtain information about the corresponding seismic risk. The project main targets can be summarized to the following:

- Increase of risk perception by citizens and the development of the citizens' science
- Capacity building of local practitioners and building contractors
- Engagement of local stakeholders and policy makers leading them to establish prevention plans in the development of urban resilience strategies.
-

3. Distribution of the questionnaires and collecting the data: Methodology

To develop a risk management policy (including insurance) the concept of the national responsibility of the Palestinian Community was considered important. Thus a methodology was developed that relied on the input and sharing of all governmental and non-governmental organizations, the private sector, men, women, youth, students, and professionals who play an important role and contribute in the DRM.



The methodology to develop the risk management policy in oPt included the following activities:

- Preparing a questionnaire that contains guidelines for risk management policy (see Appendix 1)
- Distributing the questionnaires to organizations/stakeholders pertinent to DRM, per Table 1.
- Conducting 7 meetings and workshops during the period 25th of February till 7th of April 2016 where most concerned ministries, governmental and non-governmental organizations participated in these meetings and workshops. All participants represented the decision making level of their institutions. The workshops aimed to explain and discuss the main topics of the questionnaire and seek answers.
- Communicating with the stakeholders via e-mail, SKYPE, phone, etc. to answer their questions.
- Collecting the completed questionnaires from stakeholders. Most stakeholders answered few questions from the questionnaire. This was due to the fact that those un-answered questions are not relevant to their duties. For more details about the stakeholders and the sections/questions which they answered, see Appendix 1.
- Adding all the answers from the collected questionnaires in one questionnaire and analyzing the data presented in the questionnaires by different organizations, see Appendix 1.

4. Meetings with stakeholders

During the period from the 25th of February till 20th of April 2016 the following meetings and workshops were conducted:

- 1- The first meeting/workshop with the National Team for DRM
 - Date: 25th of February.
 - Place: Al Bireh city.
 - Participants: 11 persons from National Team for DRM.
 - For more details about the National Team members (GOs and NGOs stakeholders) see Table 1-a.
- 2- A meeting with Eng. Hasam Tubail from UNDP
 - Date: 1st of March.
 - Place: Ramallah city.
 - Participants: one person.
 - For more details about the UNDP representative see Table 1-e.
- 3- A meeting with Engineers Association - Jerusalem Center (EAJC) representatives

- Date: 3rd of March.
 - Place: Nablus city.
 - Participants: two persons
 - For more details about the EAJC representatives see Table 1-b.
- 4- A meeting with General Contractor Union (GCU) representative
- Date: 3rd of March.
 - Place: Nablus city.
 - Participants: one person.
 - For more details about the GCU representative see Table 1-c.
- 5- Two meetings with Nablus Municipality and Hebron Municipality representatives
- Date: 6th of March.
 - Place: Nablus city.
 - Participants: three persons from Nablus Municipality and one person from Hebron Municipality.
 - For more details, see Table 1-d.
- 6- A meeting with the National Agency for Disaster Risk Mitigation (NADRM) representatives.
- Date: 8th of March.
 - Place: Ramallah city.
 - No of the Participants: two persons.
 - For more details, see Table 1-b.
- 7- A meeting with Ramallah Municipality representative and other stakeholders.
- Date: 10th of March.
 - Place: Ramallah city.
 - No of the Participants: 6 persons.
 - For more details, see Table 1-d.
- 8- The second meeting/workshop with the National Team for DRM.
- Date: 7th of April.
 - Place: Ramallah city.
 - No of the Participants: 13 persons.
 - For more details, see Table 1-a.
- 9- A meeting with Palestinian Insurance Federation (PIF)
- Date: 20th of April
 - Place: Nablus - Ramallah cities, via SKYPE
 - Participants: one person.
 - For more details, see Table 2-c.

5. Synthesis of discussions

During the above mentioned meetings, workshops, SKYPE conferences and emails correspondences, the most important topics which have been raised and discussed with stakeholders (governmental, nongovernmental and private organizations presented in Table 1 included:

- The definition and orientation on SASPARM 2.0 project background.
- The idea and objectives of SASPARM 2.0.
- The target groups in the project, which are included in the project activities.
- The contents of the questionnaire and its objectives.
- The collection of the required information and data from each organization.
- The results and the output of some specific items from the questionnaire.
- The future cooperation with the stakeholders during and after the implementation of SASPARM 2.0 towards achieving its targets and objectives.
- Identifying the existing disaster risk management policy (including insurance) aimed at mitigating the impact of socio-economic losses in Palestine, this includes the following key elements:
 - Risk assessment and emergency preparedness (risk analysis, risk communication and awareness, policy implications of risk assessment outcomes, and post-disaster impact analysis and quantification).
 - Risk financing (financial exposure and capacity, risk financing and transfer, institutional arrangements and fiscal policies).

6. Summary of the views and discussions with the different stakeholders:

The Palestinian Insurance Federation (PIF):

- 1- The PIF showed clear concern and interest to share in all activities connected to disaster risk reduction. The PIF expressed major reasons that insurance companies refrain from dealing with regulations connected to insurance against earthquake risks. These reasons can be summarized as follows:
 - Absence of seismic vulnerability classes, thus there is no possibility to identify and calculate the fees that companies can charge in insurance policies. This is because these fees should be connected with the seismic vulnerability of the buildings to be insured.
 - Lack of awareness among people about the importance of such insurance.

- The special type and nature of the Palestinian case that determines the priorities adopted by Palestinian society and institutions which is usually connected to the daily life of the people.

- 2- The PIF requested conducting activities like workshops and lectures about the role of the insurance sector in the DRR in partnership with all stakeholders from governmental and non-governmental intuitions. These activities should include presenting case studies from around the world where the insurance system contributed to DRR.

Representatives from the Municipalities

Through working on the questionnaires, the municipalities highlighted the following:

- 1- Absence of clear structure at the national level for disaster risk management which was a major reason behind the inability of the municipalities to adopt and implement most of the criteria and requirements connected with DRR.

- 2- Absence of a seismic code before 2014, which added to the inability of the municipalities to monitor and control buildings types and systems towards the reduction of seismic risks.

- 3- The institutions responsible for building construction do not have clear mechanisms and regulations that can enable the municipalities to make sure these buildings are constructed according to the approved design drawings.

Engineers Association and the Contractors Union

- 1- Both the Engineers Association and the Contractors Union emphasized the need to have a mechanism which enforces the adoption and integration of building seismic design and construction requirements adopted by the Engineers Association.

- 2- The need for all institutions and municipalities to work with only the engineering design offices registered and classified by the Engineers Association during the design and construction of buildings. These institutions should be required to follow all mechanisms adopted by the Engineers Association which are connected with the technical requirements and details as per the seismic design code.

Ministries and Governmental Institutions (National Team)

- 1- The special nature of the Palestinian case makes it difficult to implement the international criteria and requirements connected with sustainable development and DRR.
- 2- There is no sustainable development under occupation. The difficulty in meeting the daily needs of people and the sanctions imposed by the occupation on both people and Palestinian Institutions diverts the priorities of Palestinians towards achieving these basic daily needs.
- 3- There is no safe investment environment due to risk and lack of insurance or protection that leads investors to refrain from investing in the area.
- 4- The National Team, along with NGO representatives, emphasized the importance of integrating SASPARM 2 results and other studies conducted by UPDRRC with the projects of European Partners and the international community including the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) and the World Bank.

Table 1

Palestinian institutions/ authorities pertinent to Disaster Risk Management /stakeholders

| a) Government- National Team |
|--|
| Partner/ Organization Team member and contact person |
| <p>President's office Dr. Abdullah Al-Najjar Assistant Deputy</p> |
| <p>General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers (GSCM) Dr. Maen Fraihat The head of civil organizations and human rights</p> |
| <p>Civil Defense Directorate (CDD) Eng. Ammar Salameh Director of Disaster Management</p> |
| <p>High Council of Civil Defence (HCCD) Eng. Ammar Salameh Director of Disaster Management</p> |
| <p>Ministry of Planning and Administrative Development (MoPAD) Mrs. Dana Erekat Head of Aid Management and Coordination Directorate</p> |

Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA)
Dr. Omar Awadallah
Chairman of the General Administration of the United Nations

Ministry of Health (MOH)
Dr. Basem Rimawi
General Manager of Ambulance and Emergency

Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MOEHE)
Mrs. Abeer Salhi
Director of Health Services Section/School Health

Ministry of Public Works (MPW)
Mr. Afif Ali Isayed
Assistant Deputy

Ministry of Local Government (MOLG)
Mr. Walid Halayqa
General Manager

Ministry of Communications (MOC)
Eng. Allan Ghazi
Director of Projects Department

Women Affairs Ministry (MOWA)
Mrs. Ghada Elian
Director of Coordination

Environment Quality Authority (EQA)
Eng. Ahmed Abu Thaher
General Manager of International Relations and Projects

Water Authority (PWA)
Mrs. Majeda Alawneh
General Manager of International Relations and Projects

Civil Society Organization Commission (CSOC)
Mr. Amjad Abu Shamleh
General Manager of Cooperation and Coordination

Agriculture Disaster Risk Reduction & Insurance Fund (PADRRIF's)
Eng. Jumana Jaghoub
Manager of Risk Mitigation Department

b) Nongovernmental Organization and Academic

Partner/ Organization Team member and contact person

Urban Planning & Disaster Risk Reduction Center (UPDRRC)
Prof. Jalal Al- Dabbeek
Associate Prof.
Director of the Centre

Engineering Association - Jerusalem Center (EAJC)
Eng. Majdi Al Saleh

| |
|---|
| <p>Palestinian Red Crescent Society (PRCS) Eng. Bashir Ahmad Head of Disaster Management</p> |
| <p>National Agency for Disaster Risk Mitigation (NADRM) Wasef Erekat</p> |
| <p>Executive Office for Refugees (WOFR) Mr. Jamal Lafi Chairman of Executive Office</p> |

| |
|--|
| <p>c) Private Organizations</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Partner/ Organization Team member and contact person</p> |
| <p>General Contractor Union (GCU) Eng. Marwan juma'</p> |
| <p>Palestinian Insurance Federation (PIF) Mr. Amjad</p> |

| |
|---|
| d) Municipalities (Main Municipalities) |
| Partner/ Organization Team member and contact person |
| Nablus Municipality (NM) Eng. Sameh Tbeleh (Mayor) |
| Ramallah Municipality Eng. Musa Hadeed (Mayor) |
| Hebron Municipality Sameh Ja'bari Head of Disaster Management Department |

| |
|--|
| e) United Nations Organizations |
| Partner/ Organization Team member and contact person |
| UNDP's Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People (UNDP/PAPP) Eng. Husam Tubail Deputy Team Leader Environment and Natural Resources Team Disaster Risk Management focal point |

Appendices

Appendix 1: Questionnaire

Appendix 2: Selected Photos During the Meetings and Workshops

