United Nations
Disaster Assessment and Coordination team

UNDAC DISASTER RESPONSE PREPAREDNESS MISSION TO THE STATE OF PALESTINE

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Acronyms

ACU	Access Coordination Unit
AIDA	Association of International Development Agencies
CERF	Central Emergency Response Fund
CMWU	Coastal Municipalities Water Utility
CODs	Common Operational Datasets
COGAT	Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories Unit
DMU	Disaster Management Unit
DRP	Disaster Response Preparedness
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
DST	Dead Sea Transform
ECHO	European Commission Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection
ERF	Emergency Response Fund
ESSEC	Sciences and Seismic Engineering Centre
FAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization
FODs	Fundamental Operational Datasets
GARD	Get Airports Ready for Disasters
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GDRMC	Governorate Disaster Risk Management Committee
GECs	Governorate Emergency Committees
GJEORs	Governorate Joint Emergency Operations Rooms
HCT	Humanitarian Country Team
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
ICG	Inter-Cluster Coordination Group
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
INSARAG	The International Search and Rescue Advisory Group
MIRA	Multi Cluster/Sector Initial Rapid Assessment
MoA	Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture
MOEHE	Ministry of Education and Higher Education
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoI	Ministry of Interior
MOPAD	Ministry of Planning and Administrative Development
MoPWH	Ministry of Public Works and Housing
MOSA	Ministry of Social Affairs
MOWA	Ministry of Women's Affairs
NADRM	National Agency for Disaster Risk Mitigation
NDRMFPC	National Disaster Risk Management Focal Point Committee
NEC	National Emergency Council
NEOSC	National Emergency Operations and Support Centre
NGOs	Non-governmental organisations
NIS	Israeli new shekel
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OSOCC	On-Site Operations Coordination Centre
PAPP	Programme of Assistance to Palestine
PCBS	Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics
PCD	Palestinian Civil Defence
PDRMC	Palestine Disaster Risk Management Commission
PEA	Palestinian Engineer's Association
PLC	Palestinian Legislative Council
PRCS	Palestinian Red Crescent Society
PSART	Palestinian Search and Rescue Team
RC/HC	United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in the State of Palestine
RDC	Reception and Departure Centre
SRP	Humanitarian Strategic Response Plan
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDAC	United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNISDR	United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNOSAT	United Nations Operational Satellite Applications Programme
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
USAR	Urban search and rescue
VPP	Vulnerability Profile Project
WFP	United Nations World Food Programme
WHO	United Nations World Health Organization
USAR	Urban search and rescue

Foreword

The United Nations (UN) family in the State of Palestine commends the Palestinian Authorities for their proactivity towards strengthening their disaster response preparedness (DRP) capacity. By acting on this important prerogative, the Palestinian Authorities have taken an important step towards improving their capacity to mitigate against, and respond to, disasters. In seeking to build upon its existing disaster risk management systems, and to strengthen disaster management capacity at all levels, the Palestinian Authorities have the full support of the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT), and the UN County Team (UNCT) and implementing partners.

At the request of the Palestinian Authorities, a UN Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) DRP Mission deployed to the Gaza Strip and the West Bank in March-April 2014 to review and assess the disaster risk management systems, capacities, and capabilities, and to recommend measures to strengthen disaster preparedness and response coordination at the national, governorate and local levels.

The UNDAC team has completed its work with the support of the Palestinian Authorities and submits this report.

The UN family will continue to support the Palestinian Authorities and people of the State of Palestine in their commendable efforts to better mitigate against, prepare for, respond to, and recover from potential future disasters.

Mr James W. Rawley

UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator (RC/HC)
in the State of Palestine

Acknowledgements

The UNDAC team wishes to express its sincere thanks to the Government of the State of Palestine and the authorities and institutions that participated in the mission. The UNDAC team also wished to acknowledge the tremendous support and assistance received throughout the mission from the RC/HC, the HCT, the UNCT, and the non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Many people played an active role in making the mission happen and also contributed so to the recommendations in this report, and without their engagement and support we would not have been able to accomplish this task: thank you.

Particular thanks are due to the Deputy Chief of Staff of the President's Office, Mr Mohamed Odeh, the Palestinian Civil Defence (PCD), and Brigadier Issa, whose support to the mission was invaluable. Likewise, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Palestine Country Office and UN Development Programme (UNDP) colleagues deserve high praise for their assistance in the preparations, and for supporting and providing expert advice to the UNDAC team during the mission.

It has been a great pleasure for the UNDAC team to have met with so many people and organisations who are dedicated to building and maintaining a robust disaster risk management system throughout the State of Palestine, one that can protect the people and respond quickly and effectively in times of need.

Mr Terje Skavdal
UNDAC Team Leader

Executive summary

This UNDAC DRP mission has its genesis in the lessons-learnt exercises undertaken following the winter storms of 2013. These exercises outlined the urgent need to enhance disaster response preparedness in the State of Palestine, emphasising the requirement for a disaster risk reduction (DRR) approach to the humanitarian and development strategies.

The purpose of the mission was to review the capacities and functionalities of the disaster management system of the State of Palestine and to examine linkages to the international humanitarian system.

To engage this task, an UNDAC team undertook a mission to the State of Palestine from 23 March to 5 April 2014. The Terms of Reference (ToR) were defined and agreed in advance by the national authorities, stakeholders and the UNCT. The team consisted of 11 members who travelled from outside of the State of Palestine, and six UN colleagues based in the state.

On the ground, the UNDAC team had an intensive two-week programme of visits and interviews with more than 200 people affiliated with ministries, authorities, agencies and institutions playing important roles in disaster risk management at the national and local levels.

In doing so, the UNDAC team worked under the guidance of the Palestine Authorities and the RC/HC, and consulted with a wide range of partners that included donors and Israeli counterparts. The team conducted field visits, several multi-stakeholder workshops, bilateral discussions with line ministries and scientific experts, as well as briefing and debriefing meetings with the HCT and the Palestinian Authority's DRR Committee.

The UNDAC team formulated a set recommendations intended to strengthen the disaster management system in the State of Palestine. The findings and recommendations presented are based on assumptions and principles discussed and agreed at the launch meeting in Ramallah on 24 March 2014, which stipulated that the overarching principles for national disaster risk management in the State of Palestine should be:

i. **Principle of *Responsibility*:** DRR is the responsibility of all actors and all sectors including civil society and the private sector.

ii. **Principle of *Closeness*:** Action should be implemented and coordinated at the lowest or most localized operational level.

iii. **Collaboration and coordination:** All entities in the disaster risk management system must ensure the best possible collaboration and coordination within other actors.

iv. **Principle of *Normality*:** Emergency response should follow established procedures and processes that are as close to the normal working processes as possible, without causing unnecessary delay, as personnel will already be familiar with existing institutional structures and working arrangements.

v. **Learning-driven approach:** It is important that disaster risk management plans and risk reduction measures are built on experiences, good practices and lessons learnt from previous emergencies.

The following are some of the key findings are recommendations of the mission:

1. Context

Regarding risk analysis, the national authorities have, to date, used single-hazard approaches to assessing risks. There is a need to move to a multi-hazard approach. It is recommended that the Ministry of Planning and Administrative Development (MOPAD) should lead the national risk analysis approach.

The Gaza Strip highly vulnerable to a range of disaster risks. It is apparent that even a moderate-scale emergency has the potential to become catastrophic. Looking into critical life-saving sectors such as health and water/sanitation, the ability to prepare for and recover from shocks and disasters is presently severely degraded.

It is strongly recommended that a 'minimum preparedness' approach is developed for Gaza. This should focus on key life-saving sectors (specifically: health, water and sanitation, and energy), and agreed procedures for access for search and rescue. There is a need to work with Israel and other political actors on this approach.

2. National disaster management framework

Regarding the national disaster management framework, policy on disaster risk management is not coherent across the whole of government. The Civil Defence Law no. 3 is too limited in scope for broad risk management.

There is a strong sense of community support in Palestine and there are many good practices at the local level that should be carried forward in strengthening national disaster risk management. The suggested national framework has to be understood as both as a top-down and a bottom-up approach where national institutions will provide a support framework to strengthen resilience at the community level.

It is recommended that the coordination of disaster risk management in Palestine be strengthened by expanding and/or creating an institutional framework of coordination.

3. National and local disaster response capacity

The constraints of national response capacity posed by the context and by resource limitations means that developing resilience at community level needs to be a key strategy in DRR for both West Bank and Gaza. At the same time, the experience of communities in self-organised crisis management is a strong asset on which to build - this is a key opportunity.

While reducing long term vulnerabilities at community level should be built into the national development plan, it is also important to strengthen communities' preparedness resources for disaster events. Linking communities in disaster response networks should be addressed. For this it may be beneficial to base on existing local resources, for example the primary healthcare system.

4. Disaster contingency planning, monitoring, damage assessments and needs capacity

Current contingency plans have been tested often on smaller, localized emergencies. Access restrictions can usually be worked around in such cases. However, the access issue for a severe, wide-area disaster has not been fully addressed in contingency plans.

Contingency planning at various levels should be aligned in crucial areas including cross-border. This

can be achieved through the adoption of common standard operating procedures, communication protocols and joint exercises at all levels.

Fragmentation of the State of Palestine (due to access restrictions) and of the national authorities (due to political division) is a major factor in implementing contingency plans. National and international contingency plans have not been fully aligned and this risks gaps and overlaps in any major disaster response. The establishment of a Unity Government in June 2014 may create greater opportunities to enhance contingency planning.

5. Public awareness and education

Building public awareness could be seen as the first step in engaging the community in disaster management. Community Based Disaster Management is the best preparation to combat disasters. More investment should be placed in running awareness programmes and engaging the community in mapping hazards and vulnerabilities.

Strengthening the private sector's role in awareness building should be considered, and public awareness efforts should be an integral and strategic part of all disaster preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery plans at the national and local levels. In summary, the vision is for a disaster-resilient Palestine that will prioritize the resilience and safety of all Palestinians across the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Building resilience requires a shift from a reactive approach to a proactive one that will safeguard sustainable development and economic growth and work within the special context of the State of Palestine.

Introduction

Basis of the mission

This UNDAC DRP mission has its basis in the lessons-learned exercises undertaken following the winter storms of January and December of 2013. The exercises stated the urgent need to enhance disaster response preparedness in the State of Palestine, also emphasising the requirement for a DRR approach to humanitarian and development strategies.

Similarly, Margareta Wahlström, the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for DRR, visited the State of Palestine in February 2013, and advised the Prime Minister to introduce a policy that would guide disaster risk management and enhance coordination between the different ministries. Ms Wahlström also advised the RC/HC to further develop the DRR approach in the State of Palestine.

In line with the Hyogo Framework for Action and the UN Action Plan on DRR for Resilience, disaster risk management is included in both the Humanitarian Strategic Response Plan (SRP) and the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for the State of Palestine. In order to operationalise DRR, the UN Working Group on DRR[1] was established in June 2013 under the leadership of the RC/HC.

In furtherance to these initiatives, an assessment by World Bank in February 2014 after Winter Storm Alexa (December 2014), conducted with full UN participation, concluded that there is need to prioritise the adoption of a DRR strategy in the Palestinian Development Plan. The assessment also outlined the need for enhanced inter-institutional coordination, the development and implementation of a legal framework, and the development and testing of emergency response plans.

Overview of the mission

The UNDAC DRP mission took place from 23 March to 5 April 2014, visiting the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

The purpose of the mission was to review the capacities and functionalities of the disaster management system of the State of Palestine – in relation to their ability to mitigate, prepare, respond and recover from emergencies – and to examine linkages to the international humanitarian system.

The mission was launched at a workshop hosted by the President's Office with the participation all key partners, including the PCD, the PRCS and the relevant line ministries, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the AIDA, and the UN Working Group on DRR.

In collaboration with the PCD and the President's Office, the UNDAC team worked under the guidance of the Palestine Authorities and the RC/HC, and consulted with the PRCS, and UN and NGO partners, as well as the key donors. The UNDAC team also liaised and discussed with the relevant Israeli counterparts.

The mission was formed of an intensive programme of field visits, and interviews with more than 200 people – from ministries, authorities, agencies, organisations and institutions at the national and local levels – that play an important role in disaster risk management in the State of Palestine.

On the basis of the field visits, interviews and research the UNDAC team formulated recommendations that would strengthen the disaster management system in the State of Palestine. This report summarises the analysis and outlines the recommendations which build upon the existing initiatives by national

and international actors, and also identifies gaps in the system.

The UNDAC team benefited from an understanding of the existing capacities, good practices, and progress shown by different actors when responding to disasters and emergencies in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

The recommendations do not suggest starting anew, but to continue building a culture of disaster risk management in the State of Palestine. All recommendations apply to both West Bank and the Gaza Strip, except for one special recommendation to address the specific current challenges in the Gaza Strip (item 6 in the Recommendations table).

The recommendations should not be seen as directive, but rather as a base for discussion among the key stakeholders involved in disaster risk management in the State of Palestine.

The team was initially planned to consist of 17 members but due to a strike at the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs six members were unable to travel, a final team of 11 members travelled, which was strengthened by six UN colleagues based in the State of Palestine and two members who provided remote support. The members who travelled, and those based in-country, were as follows:

Name	Country/Organisation	UNDAC status
	Team management	
Terje Skavdal	OCHA, Geneva – Team Leader	UNDAC Member
Maria Jose Torres	OCHA, State of Palestine – Deputy Team Leader	UNDAC Member
Albrecht Beck	OCHA, Geneva	UNDAC Member
Abdelqader Abu Awad	OCHA, ROMENA	UNDAC Member
	Team members	
Alois Hirschmugl	European Commission Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO)	UNDAC Member
Hanne Eriksen	Norway	UNDAC Member
Luna Abu-Swaireh	UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR), Egypt	UNDAC Member
Mamoun Abu Zraeq	Jordan	UNDAC Member
Nihan Erdogan	OCHA, Geneva	UNDAC Member
Anders Laukvik	International Humanitarian Partnership	Support to UNDAC
Husham Tubail	UNDP, State of Palestine	Associate support to UNDAC
Iyad Shwaikeh	OCHA, State of Palestine	Associate support to UNDAC
Majed Abu Kubi	OCHA, State of Palestine	Associate support to UNDAC
Nigel Woof	MapAction	Associate support to UNDAC
Nisreen Alami	Senior Gender Advisor to State of Palestine HCT	Associate support to UNDAC
Rima Abumiddain	UNDP, State of Palestine	Associate support to UNDAC
	Remote support	
Peter Holmström	MSB Sweden	UNDAC Member
Andreas Frantzis	ECHO	Associate European Union Civil Protection Mechanism team member to UNDAC
Klaus Maurer	Germany	UNDAC Member
Robert Spiegel	Austria	UNDAC Member
David Woods	OCHA, Geneva	Associate support to UNDAC
Solveig Thorvaldsdottir	Consultant to OCHA, Geneva	Associate support to UNDAC

Terms of Reference and methodology

The ToR (see Annex A) were defined and agreed upon by the national authorities, stakeholders and the UNCT in advance of the mission.

The mission was to be conducted, under the overall leadership of the RC/HC, to achieve the following results:

i. To review the capacities and functionalities of the national entities, within the national disaster management system of the State of Palestine, in relation to their ability to mitigate, prepare, respond and recover from emergencies, and, under the RC/HC, to examine possible linkages to the international humanitarian system.

ii. To formulate recommendations on the basis of the field visits, interviews and research undertaken. The UNDAC team was to produce this mission report summarising the analysis and conclusions, including recommendations towards strengthening the effectiveness of the national disaster management system.

iii. The UNDAC team was to cover the following areas:

   a. The context.

   b. The national disaster management framework.

   c. The national and local disaster response capacity.

   d. The disaster contingency planning, monitoring, damage assessments and need analysis capacity.

   e. The public awareness and education.

To achieve these results, the UNDAC team was tasked to work with the relevant agencies within the Palestinian Authorities, including the Presidential Technical Committee and the High Council of Civil Defence (HCCD). The UNDAC team was to consult with the UN agencies, the PRCS and NGOs, and, as appropriate, to liaise with relevant Israeli authorities. OCHA Palestine and OCHA's Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa (ROMENA) were to play an active role in the mission.

Geographic scope and field visits

The geographic scope of the mission included the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, taking into consideration restrictions on movement. Regarding methodology, the team conducted field visits, several multi-stakeholder workshops, bilateral discussions with line ministries and scientific experts, as well as briefing and debriefing meetings with both the HCT and the Palestinian Authority's DRR Committee.

The UNDAC team made a range of field visits to the Gaza Strip and within the West Bank (Nablus, Jericho and Hebron) during the mission. In the field, the UNDAC team held meetings with national and international stakeholders.

Note: *See Programme of field visits in Annex B for more details.*

1 Context

1.1. Description of the Israel-Palestine context

The UNDAC team visited the State of Palestine at a time of intense political negotiations between the Israeli and Palestinian delegations, taking place under the mediation of the United States of America. With both parties blaming each other for not fulfilling commitments, the peace process was once again on the brink of collapse. On 23 April 2014 the Palestine Liberation Organization and Hamas signed an agreement to form a Unity Government within five weeks. On 29 April 2014 the negotiations led by the United States between the Israelis and Palestinians stalled without an agreement on next steps.

The situation in the Gaza Strip was extremely fragile due to the heightened access restrictions imposed by Israel and the situation with Egypt. The economic indicators for the Gaza Strip showed a sharp decline. The HCT in the Gaza Strip was assessing the situation, as deterioration could lead to unrest and violence, further compounding the instability.

The HCT describes humanitarian situation as a protracted protection crisis, with humanitarian consequences driven by lack of respect for international law. Palestinian communities are subject to policies that undermined their ability to live normal and self-sustained lives. The long-standing policies associated to the occupation have resulted in territorial fragmentation of the State of Palestine; limited control over planning, trade and the economy; severely restricted access to land, water and other resources; and major restrictions on Palestinian movement and access within and between East Jerusalem, the rest of the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip have resulted in humanitarian needs. This situation is compounded by the difficulties in reaching a solution through negotiations, ongoing conflict, and internal Palestinian divisions. The realisation of the Unity Government over the next months may change the operating context.

As indicated by the SRP, over 2.3 million people, out of a population of 4.4 million in the State of Palestine, are affected by the following issues of concern:

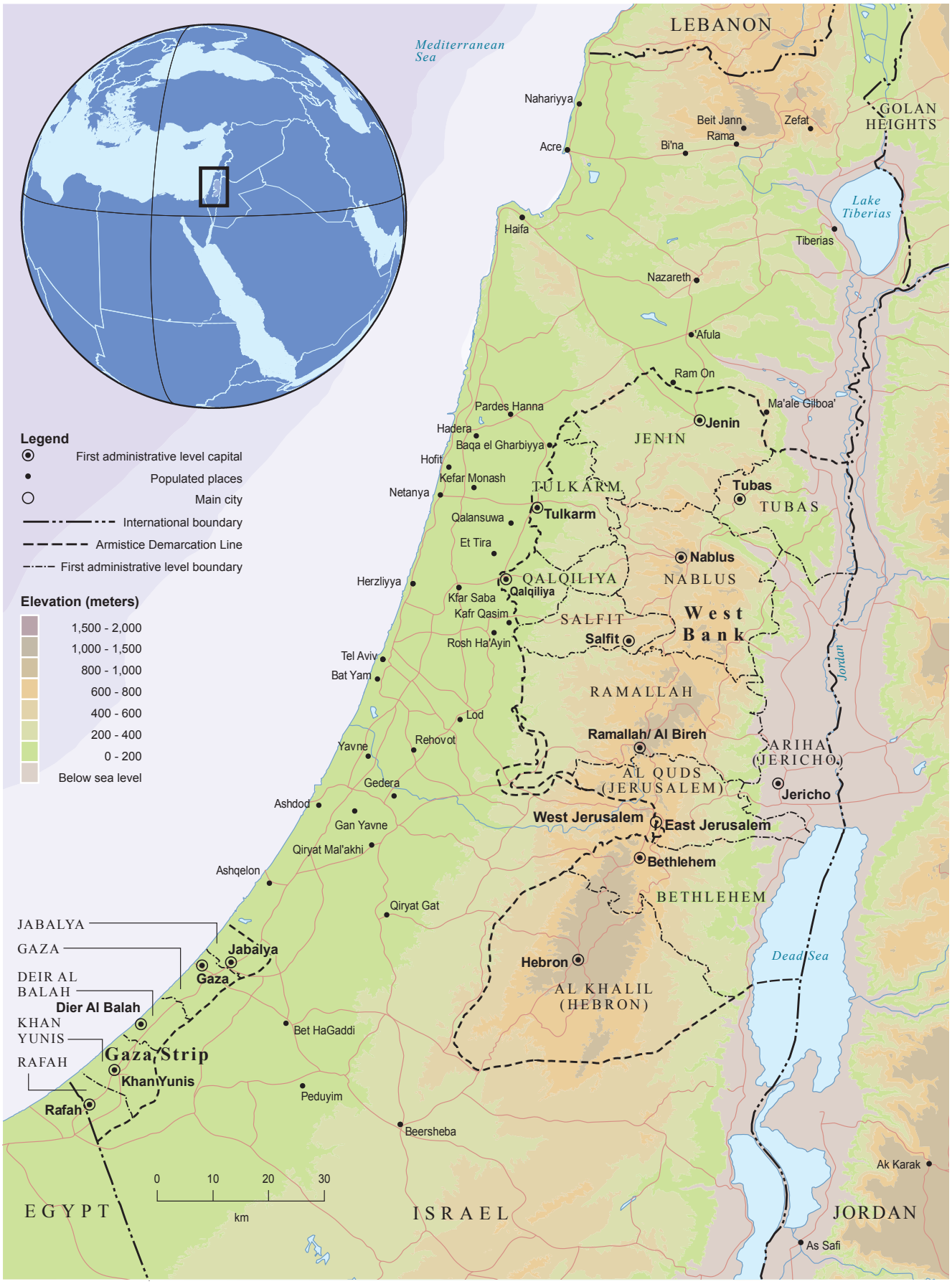
i. Restricted access to basic services (healthcare, education, and water and sanitation services).

ii. Food insecurity and declining resilience.

iii. Physical protection Israeli military and law enforcement operations, settler violence, and the actions of Palestinian armed groups and security forces.

iv. Forced displacement as a result of multiple factors including policies and practices related to the ongoing occupation, recurrent hostilities, violence and abuse.

While the Palestinian Authorities have made progress on integrated planning and budgeting, and are making concerted efforts to strengthen its fiscal planning capacities, raise domestic revenues and control expenditures, the paralysis of the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) since 2007 is an impediment to realising the separation of powers and to the production of new legislation. This also hampers reform efforts, while the present oversight and other accountability mechanisms of monitoring institutions are in need of strengthening. The local-level



Disclaimer: The designations employed and the presentation of material on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. **Map data sources:** CGIAR, United Nations Cartographic Section, ESRI, UN OCHA.

Above: OCHA Reference Map

authorities play a key role in service provision. Moreover, the continued divide between the Palestinian Authorities in the Gaza Strip and Ramallah has been characterised by factional mistrust and underlying political differences, and is creating additional obstacles to meaningful development. The formation of a Unity Government would end seven years of political division.

The rate of private sector investment in the State of Palestine's economy has remained at around 15% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for the past seven years – which is considered low by international standards – due to the Israeli restrictions. A recent World Bank report notes that restrictions on movement and access imposed by Israel are the "most significant impediment to Palestinian private sector growth," with restrictions on economic activity in Area C particularly detrimental. Manufacturing, usually a key driver of export-led growth, has stagnated since 1994, with its share of GDP falling from 19% to 10% by 2011. The declining productivity, competitiveness and sustainability of all farmers, herders and fishers are a key underlying cause of the regression in development and the humanitarian needs in the State of Palestine.

Contextual facts and statistics of the State of Palestine

Population: The Palestinian population is growing and urbanising rapidly:

i. Total population 4.42 million:
   a. West Bank (including East Jerusalem): 2.72 million
   b. The Gaza Strip: 1.70 million[2]
ii. Population density:
   a. West Bank: 468 people/square kilometres
   b. The Gaza Strip: 4,505 people/square kilometres
iii. Percentage of the population under the age of 18:
   a. West Bank: 46%
   b. The Gaza Strip: 51%
iv. Male and female: 2.18 million men and 2.11 million women[3]
v. Population growth average annual population growth rate is 2.9% (with variations between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip)[4]
vi. Refugees registered: 2.2 million[5]
   a. West Bank including East Jerusalem: 33% of the population
   b. The Gaza Strip: Over 76% of the population
   c. 24% of the West Bank refugee population lives in 19 refugee camps, and in the Gaza Strip 43% of refugees live in eight refugee camps[6]

The GDP is highly volatile:

i. Nominal GDP per capita
   a. West Bank: US$3,197
   b. The Gaza Strip: US$1,565
ii. Average annual rate of change of real GDP per capita since 1999:
   a. West Bank: 1.2%
   b. The Gaza Strip: -1.6%

Human development is categorised as medium, although there are significant disparities between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, and within the West Bank:[7]

i. Human Development Index (HDI) rank out of 186 countries:
   a. 2012: 110th
   b. 2011: 111th
ii. Poverty levels: 26%of Palestinians lived below the poverty line (Israeli new shekel (NIS) 2,293 per month), with 13% below the extreme poverty line (NIS 1,832 per month)

The drastic reduction of foreign budget support as of 2012 has led to an economic slowdown, revealing the economy's dependence on donor-financed consumption, rather than sustainable sources of growth. In addition, the Palestinian Authority's fiscal crisis has also contributed to the regression in the development of the economy and the prevailing decline in socio-economic indicators further compounding the humanitarian situation. This has resulted in major cash-flow problems affecting the provision of basic services, such as health, exacerbating the shortage of essential medicines, and, particularly in the Gaza Strip, disrupting power and fuel supplies.

In the case of the Gaza Strip, the longstanding restrictions and blockade imposed by Israel on the movement of people and goods to, from and within Gaza have continued to undermine the living conditions of 1.7 million residents. Livelihoods are further undermined by the long-term imposition of restrictions on access to agricultural lands near the fence with Israel, and to fishing areas off the coast. Notwithstanding some improvements in 2013 with regard to increased access to land and at sea following the Egyptian-brokered ceasefire understanding between Israel and Hamas in November 2012, access to these key areas, and to traditional markets for agricultural produce in Israel and the West Bank remains insufficient to effect a sustainable improvement in the agriculture and fishing sectors.

1.2. Guiding principles for the development of a national disaster management system

The guiding principles for the development of a national disaster management system in the State of Palestine are founded upon a vision for a disaster-resilient State of Palestine that prioritises the safety of all Palestinians across the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

Building resilience requires a shift from a reactive to a proactive approach, one that safeguards development and economic growth, and fits the special context of the State of Palestine.

The overarching principles for national disaster risk management in the State of Palestine should be:

i. **The Principle of "Responsibility":** DRR is the responsibility of all actors and all sectors, including civil society and the private sector. Building on the national risk and vulnerability assessment, each sector should develop specific plans for mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery. Roles and responsibilities are defined clearly for each sector, and at the local level. This will ensure a programmatic approach, one that is integrated with annual budgeting and planning to strengthen preparedness and resilience.

ii. **The Principle of "Closeness":** Action should be implemented and coordinated at the most localised operational level. Disaster risk management activities need to have a local basis, where risks, vulnerabilities and needs are addressed as relevant. Given the context of the State of Palestine, where access can be a major obstacle to deploying emergency response resources, it is essential to build resilience and capacity to respond at the local level. There is a need to integrate a gender perspective that responds to the different vulnerabilities and needs of men, women, boys and girls and capitalises on their skills, knowledge and roles within the community.

iii. **Collaboration and coordination:** All entities in the disaster risk management system must ensure the best possible collaboration and coordination with other actors. Emphasis should be placed on national-local coordination to ensure that a bottom-up approach feeds into the national coordination mechanism. It is also essential to encourage and support inter-regional collaboration between the State of Palestine, Israel, Jordan, as well as Egypt as it borders the Gaza Strip. Regional cooperation is critical for access and mobility of personnel and equipment in a major disaster, and to support planning for cross-border disasters like earthquakes.

iv. **The Principle of "Normality":** Emergency response should follow established procedures and processes that are as close to the normal working processes as possible, without causing unnecessary delay, as personnel will already be familiar with existing institutional structures and working arrangements.

v. **A Learning-driven approach:** It is important that disaster risk management plans and risk reduction measures are built on experiences, good practices and lessons learnt from previous disasters and emergencies. A systematic documentation of these practices is essential to ensure that learning is captured and applied.

1.3. Risk analysis in the State of Palestine

The UNDAC team observed that, against a background of a protracted humanitarian protection crisis associated with conflict and occupation, the State of Palestine is vulnerable to disaster shocks that could arise from natural hazards, escalations in conflict, or other man-made hazards and threats.

In this multi-hazard environment, new emergencies have the potential to be triggered and aggravated by interdependent factors; while it is well understood that a natural disaster may be made worse by access restrictions and conflict-related vulnerabilities, it is also possible that such natural hazard events could create conditions for a rapid escalation of conflict and human rights degradations, in ways that are difficult to forecast. However, between the different levels of the authorities, there is a lack of risk assessment, response planning and coordination.

The Climate Change Adaptation Programme of Action for the Palestinian Authority addressed the risks associated with climate change and identified the need to build capacities in DRR as this is essential to climate change adaptation measures within the State of Palestine..

The PCD has identified the risks in the State of Palestine in the "National Plan for Disaster Management" (October 2010 – still in draft) as follows:

i. Earthquakes Environment-related disasters.

ii. Environmental pollution disasters related to occupation of nuclear contamination.

iii. Disasters associated with climate change Industrial Hazards.

The draft plan adopted an approach developed by UNDP and the Programme of Assistance to Palestine (PAPP) in 2008 – An assessment on DRR in the State of Palestine – however, this plan is old and needs to be updated.

A proposed new framework for assessing risks and vulnerability

The following is an initial risk and vulnerability framework for the State of Palestine developed by the UNDAC team that could be used to develop a multi-hazard, multi-stakeholder risk assessment in the State of Palestine.

There are three main risks (natural hazards, conflict-related and man-made) and five key vulnerabilities (access, intra-Palestinian divide, infrastructure vulnerability, social vulnerability and economic vulnerability).

i. **Natural hazards:** The State of Palestine is vulnerable to natural hazards including earthquakes, floods, droughts and landslides. The whole region around the State of Palestine faces ongoing small- to mid-scale disaster risks, and there is also significant potential for a large-scale urban disaster. The earthquake risk is associated with the tectonic plate boundary in the Jordan Valley known as the Dead Sea Transform (DST). Historical records show that major earthquakes have caused severe damage and many hundreds, and sometimes thousands, of fatalities. The possibility of a major destructive earthquake is part of all contingency plan scenarios. Flash flooding is also a natural hazard as a result of heavy rains. Water shortage and drought are chronic problems in the region due to its arid conditions.

   During 2013 the State of Palestine experienced two serious winter storms that tested the ability to respond and recover from an emergency, and

clearly showed that DRR, including preparedness, was a gap. A winter storm struck the region from 7-10 January 2013 and caused severe damage to agriculture and infrastructure in the northern part of the West Bank. About 12,000 people across 190 communities were affected by the storm. In December 2013, Winter Storm Alexa impacted both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The precipitation in four days represented 75% of the average annual total. The snow reached 60-100 centimetres deep in the West Bank. Heavy flooding in the Gaza Strip caused the displacement of almost 10,000 people to temporary shelters, damaging approximately 21,000 homes. Damages and loses were estimated at over USD 130 million.

ii. **Conflict escalations:** There are many scenarios in which escalations of tension or actual conflict might create sudden-onset emergency conditions. This risk is particularly acute and obvious in the Gaza Strip, where offensive military operations must be considered as possible at any time. However, in the West Bank, any changes in the political environment could increase violence with consequent humanitarian impacts. Detailed analysis of these potential scenarios is beyond the scope of this report.

iii. **Other man-made hazards:** Ongoing natural resource stress and environmental degradation creates the conditions for a crisis arising from, or interacting with, a man-made factor. Such a situation occurred in the December 2012 winter storm in the Gaza Strip, where degraded sewage management systems combined with flood water to create a severe public health hazard. Risks posed by industrial, energy and defence-related installations in neighbouring territories have also not been assessed.

Vulnerability factors are those that increase the consequences of a disaster event. The vulnerability conditions of the State of Palestine in general could be classified as high to very high, driven by the following issues:

i. **Access restrictions:** Access and movement restrictions arising from the Israeli occupation come in the form of military checkpoints, gates, restricted roads on which Palestinians are forbidden from travelling, a permit regime that constrains Palestinian movement, the construction of the approximately 708 kilometre-long barrier, and Israeli settlements (with an estimated population of more than 500,000 inhabitants in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem) in breach of international law. In addition, since Hamas' takeover of the Gaza Strip in 2007, the blockade of the Gaza Strip by Israel, and the prolonged access restrictions, the situation there has remained extremely volatile.

   Access restrictions constrain the development of the built environment, and limit good practices in disaster resilient local development. In the Gaza Strip, restrictions on the import of construction materials aggravate this issue further. In the event of a disaster, national and international rescue and relief teams would be likely to face challenges in getting timely access to the affected areas unless the existing system of access restrictions was lifted; there is no agreed protocol for this to happen. The Gaza Strip blockade and the recurrent hostilities, including large-scale Israeli military operations (most recently, November 2012's Operation Pillar of Defence), would represent an additional source of complexity in the event of planning an international response to a disaster.

ii. **The intra-Palestinian divide:** Relations between Fatah and Hamas deteriorated sharply following Hamas' victory in September 2006 following parliamentary elections in the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) and Gaza Strip. A violent struggle ensued between the two organisations over the course of 2006-2007. A key step towards reconciliation was made in April 2011, when Fatah and Hamas signed an agreement which called for the formation of an interim unity authority. Both parties have made limited progress on the agreement since then, with the continued absence of a unity authority. On 2 June 2014 the Unity Government was announced as well as the holding of elections six months later. Disaster risk management policies that reflect a One Palestine Approach to DRR could be positively affected by this situation.

iii. **Infrastructure vulnerability:** Most Palestinian cities are located in earthquake prone areas. Recent studies conducted by the Sciences and Seismic Engineering Centre (ESSEC) at An-Najah University on vulnerability of buildings in West Bank cities (Jerusalem, Hebron, Ramallah, Nablus, Jenin, Tulkarm and Jericho) show that 33% of the surveyed buildings belong to Seismic Vulnerability Class A (i.e. likely to suffer heavy damage) and a further 40% of buildings are in class B (i.e. likely to suffer moderate damage). The situation in the Gaza Strip has not been surveyed but seems likely to pose similar risks. It is probable that poorly-constructed housing in refugee camps is particularly vulnerable to earthquakes. In addition, the quality and cost of infrastructure is impacted considerably by factors of transportation, electricity, water, and telecommunications, which are also affected by the restrictions present in Area C of the West Bank, and especially in Gaza. Transportation infrastructure is particularly problematic as Palestinian use of roads in Area C is restricted, and travel times can be inordinate; the Palestinian authorities at national and local level have also been unable to develop roads, airports or railways in or through Area C.

iv. **Social vulnerability:** Social factors that increase vulnerability of the Palestinian communities include their lack of awareness about disaster risks and their limited economic resources to create a resilient society. As in most societies, vulnerability to disaster risks is likely to be highest among children, older people, the poorest families and socially marginalised groups. In some areas of Palestine, long-term psychosocial impacts arising from the occupation, and from the blockade in the Gaza Strip, could affect local resilience.

v. **Economic vulnerability:** Palestinian economic conditions since 1994 have been volatile and unpredictable. The Oslo peace process and the establishment of the Palestinian Authority ushered in an era of rapid growth, driven by the return of some of the Palestinian diaspora, periods of relative tranquillity and large inflows of public and private capital. Average real GDP increased by 8.4% per annum from 1994-99. The outbreak of the second intifada in 2000 interrupted this trend, bringing increased violence and uncertainty and, most significantly, the intensification by Israel of a complex set of military operations that impeded the movement of people and goods and fragmented the Palestinian territories into small enclaves lacking economic cohesion. In the ensuing recession, GDP contracted by an average of 9% per

annum from 2000-2002. If such volatility persists it will inevitably impact the ability to plan and to prepare for disasters, by creating uncertainties in budgeting and resource availability for disaster risk management programmes.

The inter-agency Vulnerability Profile Project (VPP) in Area C was considered an interested approach to map and rank vulnerability according to an index to better guide planning and humanitarian response.

Additional issues relevant to the Gaza Strip

Combinations of factors make the Gaza Strip highly vulnerable to a range of disaster risks. It is apparent that even a moderate-scale emergency has the potential to become catastrophic.

Living conditions in the Gaza Strip have been heavily undermined and stunted by the heightened restrictions and blockade on land and at sea imposed by Israel on the movement of people and goods to, from and within Gaza, and also by the impact on livelihoods caused by the restrictions on access to agricultural lands near the fence with Israel and to fishing areas.

Since July 2013, the closure by Egypt of the illegal tunnels and the severe constraints on travel through Rafah have further strained the meagre economy and eroded coping mechanisms. At the time of the UNDAC mission the economic indicators for the Gaza Strip portray a steepening decline. According to the latest data from the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), the unemployment rate reached a record high 38.5% in the second quarter of 2013; including 56% among youth and an astounding 88% among young female refugees. The HCT discussed the activation of the contingency plan as the deterioration of the situation could lead to unrest and violence, further compounding risks of instability.

Looking into critical life-saving sectors such as health and water/sanitation, the ability to prepare for and recover from shocks and disasters is severely degraded due to a series of factors, including:

- The serious constraints by Israel on access to import, upgrade, and maintain machinery, equipment, material and supplies necessary for reconstruction, infrastructure, and disaster response.
- Energy shortages: There is an average daily power cut of 18 hours during the last six months, in addition to fuel shortage and the lack of a regular supply. These issues complicate the response to any emergency scenario and hinder risk mitigation actions.
- Developing technical capabilities in key life-saving sectors is hindered by the political context inhibiting certain donors from engaging in capacity building, while civil servants are unable to travel outside the Gaza Strip to benefit from training.

Note: *See Annex C for the Briefing note on the Gaza Strip, and Annex D on Natural hazards in the State of Palestine.*

Recommendations

1. Climate change risks should be integrated into an effective institutional structure for DRR in the State of Palestine.
2. There should be funding from the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Planning and Administrative Development (MOPAD) dedicated to targeting sectors and communities that have the highest risk/climate vulnerability.
3. Conditions and frameworks should be created within which the Palestinian communities and people can improve their capacities to cope with risks, including climate stresses and hazards.
4. A Palestine Disaster Risk Management Commission (PDRMC) should be established (elaborated further in the next section). Technical assistance should be sought from one or more universities in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, and the analysis should be cross-referred to that done by the international actors.
5. Multi-hazard risk analysis should be conducted at national and governorate levels.
6. Incorporate risk analysis into national development plan at next revision.
7. Gender-sensitive sectoral and/or localised risk assessments should be conducted for vulnerable communities, and transfer skills in risk assessment methods to relevant institutions.
8. Risk assessments should address the specific situation of refugee camps, including infrastructure aspects.
9. The National Spatial Plan team should be adequately resourced to support spatial aspects of risk assessment.
10. Further research and investigation should be made on other aspects including environment, climate change, natural resource management and critical infrastructure.
11. It is strongly recommended that a minimum preparedness approach is developed for the Gaza Strip. This should focus on key life-saving sectors (specifically water, sanitation and health, and energy), and agreed procedures for access for search and rescue. The approach should be developed and implemented in a coordinated manner between humanitarian and national actors, both in the Gaza Strip and in the West Bank. This should be done in close collaboration with the HCT, key donors, the Palestinian Authorities, and the Government of Israel.

2 National disaster management framework

2.1. Overview of existing legal and institutional framework and mandate of the agencies responsible for national disaster management

Disaster management legal framework in the State of Palestine

According to Article 110 of the Amended Basic Law (2003), the President of the National Authority may declare a state of emergency by decree when there is a threat to national security caused by war, invasion, and armed insurrection, or in times of natural disaster, for a period not to exceed thirty days.

The current Civil Defence Law No. 3 (1998) (henceforth "Civil Defence Law No. 3") is the main law addressing disasters in the State of Palestine. The law is modelled after the civil defence laws developed after the Cuba crises in the 1960s when war was the main threat; other disasters, such as natural disasters, were added later.

The PCD, in existence for more than 14 years, is the institution mandated by law to coordinate and respond in the case of a disaster. The PCD has over 1,000 employees and is first and foremost a fire and rescue service. The PCD is part of the national security forces and is located within the Security Sector. Various donors have been supporting it with equipment and trainings.

Civil Defence Law No. 3 is not in line with modern approaches to disaster risk management. The cold wave of January 2013 has created awareness as to the weaknesses in the system and the need to revise the law. Efforts should now be directed towards establishing a disaster risk management system that is connected to the political decision-making level.

Disaster risk management activities in the State of Palestine

The high risk of disasters in the State of Palestine – due to natural hazards, large populations living in poor quality buildings and infrastructure, institutional weaknesses and lack of public education – calls for increased capacity in disaster risk management. There is a need to introduce a culture of disaster risk analysis, mitigation and preparedness in the national authority's system, and within the population.

Disaster risk management requires efforts from many disciplines – from all levels of the national authorities and civil society organisations, each within its mandate and domain, and requires all to work together in an integrated approach. In addition, to ensure effective coordination, there is a need for a coordination body, such as disaster management entities at different strategic, operational and technical levels.

Emergency preparedness has traditionally focused on addressing casualties from conflict and daily emergencies. However, the State of Palestine is becoming increasingly aware of the possibility of natural disasters and their potential impacts. The two storms that affected the State of Palestine in 2013 tested the capacity of the State of Palestine in disaster management and highlighted several weakness and areas for improvement.

Overall, the Palestinian Authorities, such as the PCD and the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) (with the cooperation of the PRCS) were able to mount an initial response to the affected communities, but patterns of information gathering, information sharing, response provision, and response coordination were inconsistent across the affected districts, and correspondingly the roles and responsibilities surrounding disaster response were also not universally clear. The net impact was that affected communities did not always receive a consistent, fair and prioritised response. The main entities for dealing with disaster risk management in the State of Palestine are outlined in 2.2 below.

Recommendations

1. Building on a set of agreed principles, there should be revisions made to legal frameworks so as to facilitate the recommendations, and with reference to the appendix to this report.
2. An action plan should be developed for implementing the recommendations, and to strengthen structures towards a comprehensive disaster risk management approach across the whole-of-government.
3. A structure should be agreed upon and developed for the responsibility of development of the broader risk management strategy and to clarify the chain of command in emergency situations
4. The capacity of the Gender Unit within the PCD should be developed, and the role of Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA) should be strengthened within the proposed institutional framework so as to ensure wider outreach and participation, and that gender-sensitive approaches are included in the action plan.

2.2 Key actors in the State of Palestine Disaster Management Framework

According to Civil Defence Law No. 3, there are different organisations directly mentioned the disaster management framework, such as the HCCD, the Ministry of Interior (MoI), the PCD etc. – but there are also other organisations involved, such as the National Agency for Disaster Risk Mitigation (NADRM), the UN and international organisations. Some of the key organisations will be looked at in more details.

The Higher Council of Civil Defence

The HCCD is the highest body for disaster risk management in the State of Palestine. It was established in 1998 based on Civil Defence Law No. 3. The members include all of the ministries and the national authority bodies. The MoI serves as chair of the HCCD. The responsibilities of the HCCD, as defined by Civil Defence Law No. 3 and the Board of Ministers include the following:

- Develop public plans to take the necessary actions to deal with emergencies and disasters, and to specify duties of private and public services.
- Develop plans to provide protection against chemical, radioactive, bacterial contamination, and toxic gases in cooperation with the specialised agencies.
- Issue directives to organise the HCCD's duties, and to manage its operation rooms and the operation rooms of Civil Defence Committees in the governorates and provinces.

- Organise storage of all needed equipment and tools required for civil defence.
- Train civilians in first aid, evacuation and other activities. Specify tasks of the Civil Defence Committees formed in governorates in accordance with the law.
- Identify volunteers from the civilians for emergency support.
- Demonstrate alarm techniques to citizens for emergencies and disasters, and specify the required methods.
- Develop budget estimates to deal with emergencies and disasters; and submit to the Cabinet for approval and including for its inclusion within the public budget.

The Ministry of Interior

The Minister of Interior is the head of the HCCD. The Minister has the authority to decide on the necessary measures and actions to be taken in the case of an emergency. The Minister has also the highest authority on the security forces, and takes decisions for the civil defence.

The Palestine Civil Defence Directorate

The PCD works under the MoI and coordinates the HCCD related activities. The general responsibilities of the PCD include urban search and rescue (USAR), and firefighting. The PCD also manages the work of emergency teams.

The objectives of the PCD can be summarised as follows:

- Protection of lives and public and private property.
- Early-warning measures against any possible disaster.
- Supervise cooperation between different bodies of the government and NGOs in all areas of the territories.
- Identity volunteer groups from the civilians for emergency support.
- Organise the Emergency Operations Room.
- Organise and control all activities concerning explosives, bombs, radiation, dangerous chemicals and gases.
- Identify shelters for protection, evacuation and first aid.
- Train civilians in first aid, evacuation and other activities.
- Organise emergency rescue, evacuation of casualties to safe areas, firefighting, removal of damaged vehicles and opening of closed roads.

Other entities are outlined in the table below:

Entity	Role
The Security Forces	• Responsible for isolating affected areas, by closing roads in vicinity of the accidents and diverting traffic. • Prevent crowds from gathering near the affected areas. • Safeguard public and private properties and maintain the general security of the people. • Provide experts to deal with explosives.
Ministry of Health, and related organisations	• Provide medical first aid and treatment to the injured. • Established a focal point for disaster risk management, in cooperation with WHO they are going to implement disaster risk management activities related to their mandate.
Ministry of Local Government	• Maintains infrastructure and support many other sectors. • During emergencies, responsible to provide resources for rescue operations. • Municipalities and local councils established their response mechanisms, such as operation rooms and logistics arrangements with private sector.
Ministry of Public Works and Housing (MoPWH)	• Has a critical role in promoting safer construction in light of potential seismic activity, as it manages the siting and construction of infrastructure and official buildings. • During emergencies, provides resources for rescue operations, rubble removal and engineering works. • Monitors the state of external roads and maintains road conditions in Areas C and B.
Ministry of Transport	• The Ministry is responsible to maintain a database of owners of heavy-duty equipment and other tools (bulldozers, excavators, trucks, loaders, cranes). It also supervises the Meteorological Services.
Palestinian Water Authority and Coastal and Municipal Water Unit	• Provide people with reliable drinking water. Maintain good management on water resources and mitigate the risk of water contamination. • Regulates and provides the service for the Sanitation System.
Ministry of Agriculture	• Work on the protection of the agricultural land to mitigate the effect of possible desertification, drought, frost and locusts by establishing special strategies and plans. • The ministry established a disaster risk management department to manage and implement DRR programmes. • The interest of the MoA will be also reflected in the forthcoming 2014–2016 Agricultural Sector Strategy, titled Resilience and Development, in which, according to MoA officials, there will be specific reference to DRR and insurance.
Environment Authority	• In coordination with other authorities work on protection of natural resources and environment from industrial pollution. • There is a need to explore the role of the ministry in environmental emergencies as for next UNDAC mission.
MOPAD	• Coordinates the National Development Plan. • Liaises and coordinates with the international community on development and humanitarian programmes and policies though the Local Aid Coordination Secretariat.

The NADRM was founded in 2004. Its mission is to form a national framework that gathers all of the NGOs working in disaster management and emergency support.

NGOs, universities and private sector

Due to the restrictions put on the Palestinian Authority's institutions, the role of Palestinian NGOs has become increasingly important in providing assistance and services. As a result, some NGOs have developed advanced capacities.

Entity	Role
NGO	● There are a number of important NGOs that have significant roles in disaster risk management. The two key institutes are the PRCS and the ESSEC.
PRCS	● The PRCS has 22 branches covering all governorates in West Bank and Gaza. It pays special attention to disaster risk management and is considered as one of the most important organisations. It has played a very effective role during the crises situations. The PRCS provides medical aid, organises volunteers, and assists disaster affected populations in meeting their basic needs. ● List of entities established by the PRCS: i. Disaster management department. ii. Operation room. iii. DRR department. iv. Manage field hospital. v. Established National intervention team at national and local level.
Earth Sciences and Seismic Engineering Centre at An-Najah University	● In the State of Palestine ESSEC is the only specialist centre in risk assessment, disaster management and earthquake engineering. ● Since its establishment in 1996 ESSEC has implemented awareness, training, and research related activities regarding disaster risk management.
The Palestinian Engineer's Association (PEA)	● The PEA focuses on building code requirements, such as checking the building plans and designs. ● The PEA approved the seismic building code.

United Nations and international organisations

In early 2012 the Palestinian Authority adopted the seismic design specifications for buildings in the country. Under this, the first Palestinian Urban Forum was held in Nablus, with a special focus on safer cities and DRR. Many other capacity-building trainings and workshops have been taking place in the last years with the support of UNISDR. Most importantly, in 2013 the State of Palestine started taking steps towards establishing its first national disaster loss database.

Seven UN agencies in the State of Palestine are collaborating to support the PCD through the UN Working Group on DRR established in 2012 under the HCT. This initiative focuses on strengthening collaboration between the UN and the relevant Palestinian entities – mostly the PCD, but not exclusively – developing a protocol of cooperation between the State of Palestine, Israel, Egypt and Jordan in order

to facilitate timely and effective responses in the State of Palestine, building USAR capacity, increasing awareness on safety measures, community preparedness, emergency operation centres, and early warning systems, and increasing the PCD's logistical capacity for disaster response. Since May 2014, AIDA has also represented been in the UN Working Group on DRR.

As stated above, in line with the Hyogo Framework for Action and the UN Action Plan on DRR for Resilience, disaster risk management is included in both the SRP and the UNDAF for the State of Palestine.

A joint programming framework was developed in August 2012 and updated in June 2013. The framework articulates the involvement of each agency as follows:

- OCHA is engaged in developing capacities of the PCD in preparing and testing contingency plans, emergency response coordination, and information management, amongst other aspects. OCHA is also working on the regional preparedness dialogue between the State of Palestine, Jordan and Israel.
- UNDP has implemented projects in the past to enhance capacities of the PCD and can draw upon its global knowledge and regional experience in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Egypt to strengthen Palestinian institutions capacities on disaster risk management.
- UNRWA and UNICEF can play a crucial role in education and awareness of students and teachers through school safety programmes through the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE).
- WFP consider DRR among its central priorities as disasters impact food security.
- FAO is playing an important role in increasing farmers' resilience to natural disasters through assisting the Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) in the development of an agricultural risk management programme.
- UN Women can provide support to housewives in raising awareness about personal safety during disasters. UN Women can also assist the MoWA in building the capacity of the Gender Unit within the PCD, and strengthening the role of MoWA within the proposed institutional framework so as to ensure wider outreach and participation, and to ensure that gender-sensitive approaches are included in the action plan.

Some of the key findings are summarised as follows:

- The Palestinian Authorities and civil society organisations are the main entities supporting disaster risk management in the State of Palestine.
- Local authorities and national institutions, UN agencies, international NGOs and donors support risk mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery programmes exclusively. The lack of a comprehensive DRR plan has been manifest by the different approaches and initiatives, in some cases donor-driven, being implemented without much coordination or analysis as to their strategic value.
- The level of coordination and information sharing, as well as conducting joint projects, is still inconsistent and creates gaps in the complementary approach in the disaster risk management cycle. National authorities and civil society organisations segment information regarding the programmes and there are

no clear partnerships in implementing joint disaster risk management projects at the local and national levels.

- The stakeholder disaster risk management index of who is doing what, where and how? is not strong. The PRCS, the PCD, the MoPWH, the Governorate Emergency Committees (GECs) and the municipalities are the key actors in response operations. The Ministry of Health (MoH) plays major role in leading in the area of health in emergency response operations, and they started to establish a disaster risk management structure but they need technical and financial support to systemise their programmes.
- The MoA, MoI (civil defence) and the PRCS established disaster management departments in order to implement disaster risk management programmes. The role of these departments is to coordinate and conduct disaster risk management projects at the national and local levels.
- The PCD and the PRCS have developed disaster risk management strategies to guide the implementation of their programmes.
- The GECs play an important and active role in coordinating response operations in cooperation with President, the UN agencies, the local authorities and the civil society organisations.
- The water and electricity authorities are working to develop their response tools in case of major disasters by strengthening their call centres and updating their contingency plans.
- The Working Group on DRR at the President's Office has represented an important political step to start crafting the national DRR agenda; but it still requires more technical and political support to guide a coordinated implementation of DRR priorities and programmes.
- Community and grassroots organisations, as major actors in preparedness and response, did not play a major role in planning disaster risk management projects.
- Only the PRCS and the PCD have sectorial strategic plans; other entities lack the planning.

Recommendations

Roles and responsibilities for various ministries, local authorities and civil society organisations should be developed through the following actions:

1. Conduct a comprehensive capacity assessment for all stakeholders working in the State of Palestine. The purpose of this assessment is to develop a stakeholder profile for each organisation or institution working in the disaster management field. The profile would include:
   - Name of ministry, civil society or authority
   - Date of establishment
   - Disaster risk management roles and responsibilities
   - Coverage area
   - Ongoing programmes
   - Strategies and plan of action for each organisation
   - Disaster management tools and systems applied by the entity
   - Structure and coordination mechanisms
   - Membership of the organisation
   - Possible coordination at regional or cross-border collaboration
2. Organise national workshop for all stakeholders to discuss the findings of the study and to ensure consensus regarding the expected mandate.
3. Based on the approved mandate for each ministry and local authority, each entity would:
   - Develop a strategic plan for disaster risk management
   - Establish a structure to manage and implement the strategy
   - Provide technical and financial support for their plans
   - Establish their own technical teams
4. Palestinian Authorities – at the national and local levels – and civil society organisations should develop a disaster risk management structure by clearly describing roles and responsibilities for the different sectors. Each disaster risk management department should include the following:
   - A national coordinator
   - A DRR specialist
   - An emergency response team at the national and district levels
5. Equip each a disaster risk management department with disaster management systems and tools to enable the department to implement disaster management programmes effectively at the national and local levels. The suggested tools:
   - A logistics system
   - An information management programmes
   - An early-warning systems related to their mandate
   - A monitoring and evaluation system
   - A response equipment for the response teams
   - A code of conduct
6. Provide technical support for the PCD and the PRCS to review and update their disaster risk management strategic plans – the technical support would be in the following form:
   - Review the existing strategies with the disaster management departments
   - Organise strategic-planning workshop for each organisation
   - Improve the existing plans of action

2.3. Organisational structure at national, sub-national and municipal levels, including arrangement for refugee camps

The policy on disaster risk management is not coherent across the whole-of-government. There has been an emphasis on emergency response through the civil defence mechanism but this does not address the full spectrum of risks that could give rise to a national emergency. The Civil Defence Law No. 3, similarly, is too limited in scope for broad disaster risk management.

It is recognised that there is a strong sense of community support in the State of Palestine and that there are many good practices at the local level that should be used in strengthening national disaster risk management. The suggested national framework for disaster risk management therefore has to be understood as a mix of both top-down and bottom-up approaches where the national institutions will provide a support framework to strengthen resilience at the local level.

The proposal for a national framework is based on the five guiding principles. The structure for coordination also takes into account mechanisms as defined in the existing legal framework and the distribution of mandates, work and responsibilities within the State of Palestine. The proposal however suggests a strengthening of areas where there are recognised gaps, to achieve a stronger disaster risk management approach in all stages of the disaster management cycle. It also focuses on the importance of supporting the existing institutional framework so as to be able to deliver against mandates and expectations.

The Civil Defence Law No. 3 creates a good foundation for preparedness and response from a civil defence perspective; however, the law does not give a comprehensive, whole-of-government approach to a broader disaster risk management framework system. Therefore, a mechanism to achieve this through a multi-level and multi-stakeholder approach is suggested.

Given the circumstances in the State of Palestine, it is important to maintain a strong culture of preparedness and response to deal with disaster situations. This could be achieved by strengthening the coordination and operations systems.

It is recommended that the coordination of disaster risk management in the State of Palestine be strengthened by expanding and/or creating an institutional framework of coordination at the following levels:

Coordination at the national policy level:

i. The President: At the national level, the President/Prime Minister should play a key role in ensuring a unified approach across the State of Palestine and that there is coherence in disaster risk management, relevant for all geographic areas and at all stages of the disaster management cycle. At the executive level, they will also be responsible for the adoption of the necessary legal framework.

ii. PDRMC: A new organisation with the suggested title of Palestine Disaster Risk Management Commission (PDRMC) should be established, chaired by the President. It should consist of the Prime Minister, all of the relevant ministries and national authorities involved in disaster risk management, the PRCS, academia, and the relevant civil society and private sector organisations. The scope of the PRDMC should be to:

    a. Develop a national disaster risk management strategy for mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery, including national level risk analysis.

b. Guide the development of sectoral disaster risk management plans (including sectoral vulnerability and capacity assessments) which includes refugees and the refugee camps.

c. Support the development of a national contingency plan for emergency response and recovery.

d. Promote good governance and effective coordination on disaster risk management related issues.

e. Facilitate a dialogue for review and development of relevant institutional and legal frameworks.

f. Coordinate the national disaster risk management agenda with regional and global stakeholders.

National level technical level coordination for DRR:

iii. A National Disaster Risk Management Focal Point Committee (NDRMFPC) should be formed. It should have representation from all ministries/national authorities, national civil society organisations and academia at the technical level. The committee's main functions would be to:

a. Support the development of the national disaster management strategy, mitigation and preparedness plans (including community-based actions), and recovery plans.

b. Provide guidance and monitoring the implementation of DRR at national level.

c. Ensure documentation of good practices and lessons learnt in disaster risk management efforts and experiences in the State of Palestine (nationally and locally).

d. Ensure a multi-hazard approach, complementarity among various sectors plans, gender considerations, a community-based approach and the engagement of the private sector.

e. Develop and promoting a culture of safety through public awareness programmes, media engagement and civil society involvement.

Coordination at the governorate level for disaster risk management:

iv. It is suggested to establish, for each governorate, a Governorate Disaster Risk Management Committee (GDRMC) that ensures implementation of the disaster risk management plans and actions at the governorate, municipality, village and refugee camp levels. The GDRMC will ensure that communication and proper linkages are established between the national level disaster risk management committee and local communities. The GDRMC will also provide feedback to national disaster risk management Committee on the implementation of plans and any necessary corrective measures to be undertaken. The GDRMC's main functions will reflect those at the national level, including to:

a. Develop a governorate level disaster management strategy.

b. Provide guidance and monitoring on the implementation of disaster risk management planning and implementation at the municipality, village and camp levels.

c. Ensure documentation and sharing of good practices and lessons learnt in disaster risk management.

d. Promote a multi-hazard approach, complementarity among various sectors plans, gender considerations, a community-based approach and engagement of the private sector.

e. Develop and promote a culture of safety through public awareness programmes, media engagement and civil society involvement.

Coordination at the national operational level:

v. According to Civil Defence Law No. 3, the HCCD has a critical role to play in providing strategic and operational leadership in disaster preparedness and response. It is suggested that the HCCD be re-shaped into an NEC, with a direct link to the President/Prime Minister, to coordinate critical response assets in a national level crisis of any cause. It would also be the focal point for the coordination of international assistance in a large crisis. Its responsibilities would include:

   a. Advising the President/Prime Minister on the declaration of a state of emergency.

   b. Under delegated authority from the President/Prime Minister, giving directions on which ministry or authority is to lead in specific emergency situations, according to the situation.

   c. Giving strategic directions to prepare for, respond to, and mitigate the consequences of each emergency.

   d. Making arrangements for host nation support in cases of international assistance.

   e. Setting common standards and procedures for the GECs to ensure operational readiness.

   f. Mobilising support to the lowest possible level (i.e. to the local level, if possible) when responding to an emergency.

   g. Ensuring coordination and information flow between different sectors and actors involved in the response at the international, regional and national and levels.

   h. Ensuring coherent information is provided to the media, the public, and others.

   i. Overseeing and directing the work of the National Emergency Operations and Support Centre (NEOSC).

vi. The PCD will maintain its role of providing strategic and operational decision making advice to the HCCD/NEC and delivering services (fire, search and rescue, chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear etc.) as described in Civil Defence Law No. 3. It is nevertheless suggested that a review is undertaken to encompass a broader scope of civil protection in line with changes in international practices and through that also to clarify the various civil functions of the PCD. The PCD is suggested to establish and run an NEOSC. The NEOSC will be responsible for:

   a. Creating a platform for national operational coordination.

   b. Liaison and linkages with sectoral operations rooms and key actors involved in the emergency response.

   c. Ensuring communication with the governorate joint operations rooms.

   d. Providing public information and information management support.

   e. Supporting governorate activities in creating standard operating procedures.

   f. Developing a plan for training and exercises of operational coordination.

   g. Ensuring dissemination of early warnings.

The terms of reference for the NEOSC should be further developed by the PCD and approved by the HCCD.

Coordination at the governorate level for operations:

vii. At the governorate level the existing coordination mechanism of GECs under the leadership of the governor is considered to be a well-rehearsed and functional model. However, greater consistency across all governorates should be pursued through an agreed matrix of responsibilities and development of standard operating procedures. Coordination at the governorate level should reflect emergency scenarios and the need for involvement from various sectors and actors. The key responsibilities of governorate coordination mechanisms should be:

   a. Giving strategic direction to prepare for, respond and mitigate the consequences of incidents and disasters at the governorate level.

   b. Developing contingency plans and standard operating procedures for the governorate's preparedness and response.

   c. Ensuring coherence with national level emergency planning.

   d. Giving directions on who is to lead the situation according to the identified scenario.

   e. Ensuring coordination and flow of information between different sectors and national/regional actors involved in the response.

   f. Ensuring coherent information to the media, public and others.

   g. Requesting additional resources from the national level when required.

   h. Informing the PCD about any incidents and/or disasters that could require national intervention.

   i. Mobilising support to emergency responses at the local level.

   j. Liaison with international responders.

   k. Overseeing and directing the work of Governorate Joint Emergency Operations Rooms (GJEORs).

The structure described above can be summarised functionally as follows.

	National level	Governorate level
Policy and strategy	PDRMC supported by NDRMRFC	GDRMC
Operational decision making	HCCD (future NEC) supported by NEOSC	GECs supported by GJEORs

Legal framework

The UNDAC team has not been able to consider all aspects of the existing legal framework across all areas of the national institutions. For the purpose of the mission the UNDAC team concentrated on the Civil Defence Law No. 3, the main law addressing disasters in the State of Palestine. The current law was not enacted to cover broad risk management practices. This represents a deficiency in implementing a coherent approach to disaster risk management.

Even as it stands, Civil Defence Law No. 3 does not enable a civil protection (rather than civil defence) scope of action for the PCD and other agencies.

A new legal framework should meet the need for mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery. It should outline the main principles, the main functions, and outline roles and responsibilities of each national body involved in implementing the overarching disaster risk management policy suggested in this report. It should also contain provision for appropriate budgeting and funding.

However, a new disaster risk management regulatory framework can form part of a broad-based risk management approach across the whole of the government. The concept of risk-based approaches in policy should be also considered across a wide range of other functions, including infrastructure, environment, energy, natural resource management, health and other sectors; however, this is beyond the scope of this report.

The new regulatory framework should mandate a coordination structure at national and governorate levels, such as that described above, and should also cover use of the private sector, financial issues and contingency planning.

A proposed scope and structure of new legislation is offered in the Appendix to this report.

Refugee camps in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank

In Gaza there are 1,240,082 registered Palestinian refugees and eight refugee camps. In Gaza UNRWA operates with over 12,000 staff in over 200 installations across the Gaza Strip (including 245 schools in 156 school buildings with over 232,000 pupils, two vocational training centres, 22 primary health centres, and 12 distribution centres). It also supports eight community rehabilitation centres, ten women's' programme centres). UNRWA delivers education, health care, relief and social services, microcredit and emergency assistance to registered Palestinian refugees. UNRWA builds desperately needed infrastructure, including schools and shelters. In the West Bank there are 750,000 registered refugees, around 25% of whom live in 19 camps. In the West Bank, UNRWA operates runs 99 schools, with some 51,300 pupils, two vocational and technical training centres, and 42 primary health centres or focal points. It also supports 15 community rehabilitation centres and 18 women's programme centres. Most of the refugees live in West Bank towns and villages. Some camps are located next to or within municipal centres and others are in rural areas. While the West Bank has the largest number of recognised Palestinian refugee camps in the five UNWRA fields, the largest of them, Balata, has a population similar to that of the smallest camp in Gaza.

The camps were established following the 1948 conflict and the 1967 hostilities as a temporary solution and, since then, have continued growing to accommodate new demographic realities, but without proper planning. Camps are normally overcrowded, with high population densities, insufficient

sewage networks and overburdened infrastructure, thus increasing the risks for refugee populations vis-à-vis shocks and emergencies. The implementation of a DRR approach in the refugee camps would be highly recommended, particularly in critical sectors such as shelter, social infrastructure and water and sanitation. The UNDAC mission recommends a better integration of refugee camps into the national mechanisms in defining the strategic and operational approaches as part of the proposed new structure at the governorate level. This can be best achieved by ensuring that both the Department of Refugee Affairs and UNRWA are included in the development and implementation of the DRR strategy, noting that UNRWA provides services in the camps, but is not responsible for the administration of the camps.

Recommendations

1. Construct new legal framework – Civil Defence Law No. 3 describes the situation at the moment but it is inefficient.
2. A new structure is recommended to get a clearer picture of the roles and responsibilities of the organisations involved in DRR – create a new structure for DRR as suggested in the Appendix.
3. Risk assessments should address the specific situation of refugee camps, including infrastructure aspects (short to medium term).
4. The Department of Refugee Affairs and UNRWA should be a member of the proposed DRM structure at the Governorate level (short term).

2.4. Definitions of disaster management used in the State of Palestine and among key actors in the context of the State of Palestine

In the State of Palestine there will likely be, mainly due to topography, natural and man-made disasters – especially earthquakes from magnitude 6-7 (Richter scale) as well as the risk of floods, fires, industrial sewage, garbage (e.g. water contamination), and epidemics and diseases. Due to landslides, soft stories and structural irregularities, blocking of roads would be likely. Tsunamis are also a potential hazard for the Gaza Strip. From the interviews conducted, the problems caused by the occupation were mentioned, such as safety and security incidents, incursions, as well as the barrier, which acts as an obstacle to other areas of the State of Palestine being reached in time, for instance, after a fire. It was also made clear, that, due to the barrier, the natural flow of water is no longer possible, so there can be floods, for instance in Qalqiliya, Tulkarm and Jerusalem.

Disaster: A serious disruption in the functioning of a community or a society involving widespread human, material, economic or environmental losses and impacts, which exceeds the ability of the affected community or society to cope using its own resources.

Disaster risk reduction: The concept and practice of reducing disaster risks through systematic efforts to analyse and manage the causal factors of disasters, including through reduced exposure to hazards, lessened vulnerability of people and property, wise management of land and the environment, and improved preparedness for adverse events.

Disaster risk management: The systematic process of using administrative directives, organisations, and operational skills and capacities to implement strategies, policies and improved coping capacities in order to lessen the adverse impacts of hazards and the possibility of disaster.

Emergency: A state in which normal procedures are suspended and extraordinary measures are taken in order to avert a disaster.

Hazard: A dangerous phenomenon, substance, human activity or condition that may cause loss of life, injury or other health impacts, property damage, loss of livelihoods and services, social and economic disruption, or environmental damage.

Mitigation: The lessening or limitation of the adverse impacts of hazards and the potential related disasters.

Preparedness: The knowledge and capacities developed by governments, professional response and recovery organisations, communities and individuals to effectively anticipate, respond to, and recover from, the impacts of likely, imminent or current disaster events or conditions.

Prevention: The outright avoidance of adverse impacts of hazards and related disasters.

Public awareness: The extent of common knowledge about disaster risks, the factors that lead to disasters and the actions that can be taken individually and collectively to reduce exposure and vulnerability to disasters.

Recovery: The restoration, and improvement where appropriate, of facilities, livelihoods and living conditions of disaster-affected communities, including efforts to reduce disaster risk factors.

Reconstruction: The full resumption of socio-economic activities, allied to preventive measures.

Rehabilitation: The restoration of basic social functions.

Resilience: The ability of a system, community or society exposed to hazards to resist, absorb, accommodate to and recover from the effects of a disaster in a timely and efficient manner, including through the preservation and restoration of its essential basic structures and functions.

Response: The provision of emergency services and public assistance during or immediately after a disaster in order to save lives, reduce health impacts, ensure public safety, and meet the basic subsistence needs of the affected people.

Risk: The combination of the probability of an event and its negative consequences

Sustainable development: Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

Vulnerability: The characteristics and circumstances of a community, system or asset that make it susceptible to the damaging effects of a disaster.

One of the key findings was that it was difficult to ensure that the UNDAC team was always speaking about the same issues as there was no standard and common terminology; hence, there is a need to define terms that can then be used by the relevant organisations.

Recommendations

1. It is essential to have a chapter for definitions at the beginning of legal and regulatory documents so as to avoid misunderstandings.

2.5. Disaster management and risk reduction policies related to response and its implementation at the national/ governorates, municipalities/villages and camp council levels

For a disaster management policy in the State of Palestine it is essential to establish and maintain adequate arrangements to deal with all aspects of its disaster threats. This applies through all levels of the structures and organisations – from national institution level through governorate level to local authority or local level. While the HCCD is the highest policy body for disaster management in the State of Palestine, chaired by the Minister of Interior and including members from all ministries, as well as the PRCS and national authority bodies, it is lacking the participation and involvement of civil society, the private sector, academia and international organisations.

There has been an overall emphasis on emergency response through the civil defence mechanism, but, again, this does not address the full spectrum of risks that could represent a national emergency. The Civil Defence Law No. 3, similarly, is too limited in scope for risk management in a broad sense. Moreover, academia, the NGOs, and civil society organisations are not at all considered in the legislation. The clear lack of relevant common terminology is another overarching and recurring issue.

The following steps should be considered to define a national disaster management policy in the State of Palestine:

i. Accurately define the effects of the disaster threats.

ii. Identify the effects that are likely to be caused by these threats.

iii. Assess the resources available to deal with these threats.

iv. Make new organisational arrangements to enable better preparation for, response to, and recovery from disaster events.

v. Define how national disaster management policy interlocks with other aspects of national policy, especially those aspects which are concerned with national development and the protection of the environment.

Our interviews with various actors showed the lack of coherent disaster risk management and DRR policies across the authorities. In some areas, such policy was missing completely, such as in relation to land use, although a national effort under the leadership of the President's Office has been launched as of 2013 to guide strategically the effort of the Government on DRR with the participation of seven ministries and the PRCS .

There has also been an identified lack of capacity and training in disaster risk management and policy implementation at the level of the national authorities, and one may assume this is also reflected at the regional and local levels.

Recommendations

1. Land use policies and planning should be developed, and DRR should be a part of it.
2. Roles and responsibilities for civil society organisations in disasters should be developed.
3. When considering projects for funding it is advised that donors consider how projects relate to the larger DRM agenda decision-makers should be trained in disaster risk management and assessment.
4. Refugee camps should be included in a comprehensive national response plan.
5. DRR awareness campaigns should be mapped out.
6. For media engagements, advocacy messages on DRR and preparedness should be developed by the HCCD or any other relevant Palestinian Authority body.
7. Roles and responsibilities for civil society organisations in disasters should be developed.
8. Guidelines for disaster training should be developed by the relevant Palestinian Authority body, with support from the universities.
9. The authorities are advised to utilise a family of standards relating to risk management codified by the International Organization for Standardization, called ISO 31000.[8]

2.6. Financial arrangements for developing and maintaining a disaster management system at national and subnational levels

During the discussions it emerged that there is a need for financial support at the relevant organisations. Presently, each ministry has 1% of its budget dedicated to disaster response, but there is a need for a decentralised budget for the governorate and local levels. This could help to solve problems with reimbursement of equipment to private enterprises, and also for immediately purchasing the necessary means for a relief operation.

Some of the key findings were that the financial agreements at the lower levels were missing, and that there was no clear procedure for the reimbursement private companies for the use of their equipment. Additional information on the purchase process etc. is provided in section 3.4 below.

Recommendations

1. A new financial regulation for disaster response operations is required that includes an emergency funding window to cope with the immediate effects of onset emergencies.

3 National and local disaster response capacity

3.1. Coordination mechanism, including command & control/operational facilities

There seems to be no single document regarding a national response framework. Many of the people interviewed and met with spoke of the lack of efficient coordination between the local and national level authorities. This situation is exacerbated by the absence of a clear and comprehensive multi-stakeholder engagement, one that outlines defined roles and responsibilities within national and local-level disaster response plans.

The national disaster coordination/response role is expected from the HCCD. While the HCCD includes several stakeholders, the roles and responsibilities, and procedures of coordination and communication between them have not been clarified nor identified with clear bylaws.

At the governorate levels, there are some contingency plans, however, these plans are not necessarily activated and the governors do not always have the necessary space for activation due to the complications related to the fragmented land and the relationship with Israel. The inter-governorate coordination procedures are not well defined and mostly informal in nature. There are additional challenges in this coordination due to the fragmented land use in the West Bank.

The main tool for response at the governorate level is the GECs, operating from an emergency operations room. The GECs are composed mainly of security entities, the PRCS, and specific governorate-level departments depending on nature of emergency. The GECs are chaired by the Governor, who reports in turn to the President, with a delegated decision-making authority.

In a major disaster, this structure is expanded with the inclusion of more response actors. The GECs are mandated with inter-agency coordination at the local level. However, the inter-agency response coordination procedures are not clear. The communications between the local-level responders seem to work at smaller emergencies. However, there are no set procedures, and the authorities interviewed stated that communication was a challenge when it came to remote and rural areas. The local-level emergency responders are familiar with the vulnerable areas for daily emergencies. However, there is not a documented risk analysis and this negatively affects the efficiency of response.

The role of volunteers and local-level response is crucial for an efficient response. This is mainly because of the insufficient capacity of the emergency responders and also because of the restrictions in moving freely in the entire area of the West Bank. Another important actor is the private sector, particularly for the logistics, as demonstrated during the recent winter storm disaster. However, this role, including the accountability of the private sector, is not well defined in any legislation.

The Refugee camps are an important element of the emergency response. The level of preparedness, contingency planning, evacuation, training, public awareness and equipment are the common challenges for the Balata, AqbatJaber and Shu'afat refugee

camps that the UNDAC team visited. Local emergency committees and youth groups are the main structures for local-level response, although they are not well structured, activated nor integrated into the GECs. In some cases, the Palestinian Emergency Services' camp level responses are complicated by several factors, including the legal basis of who exactly should respond, the special status of camps, and the emergency response responsibility of UNRWA. With the involvement of the local emergency committees, UNRWA should develop a contingency plan and ensure better safety measures against predictable emergencies.

Recommendations

1. A comprehensive coordination structure with clear roles, responsibilities and procedures should be developed for all levels of response (national, local, community and the refugee camps).
2. The coordination mechanism between national and local levels should be re-defined and developed based on the proposed national disaster management framework.
3. The expertise, resources, and knowledge of local communities, the private sector and civil society organisations should be capitalised upon and scaled-up so as to produce lessons learnt and best practices for future emergency response scenarios.

3.1.1 Link to International Response system

The UNDAC team could not find enough evidence of the preparedness of the State of Palestine for international response in case of a major disaster. The legal framework as well as the procedures of requesting and working with the international responders is not well defined.

OCHA supports the work of the RC/HC and the two main humanitarian coordination fora: the HCT and the UNCT. The HCT, established in in 2008, meets monthly and includes actors involved at the country level in the provision of humanitarian assistance and protection.

OCHA also coordinates the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICG) that consists of six clusters/sectors, as follows: Protection Cluster, Food Security Sector, Education Cluster, WASH Cluster, Health Sector and Shelter Cluster (the Gaza Strip and the West Bank). OCHA plays a support role to the ICG in the preparation of the contingency plan and the preparedness measures. OCHA has been preparing the Humanitarian Programme Cycle on behalf of the HCT (since 2003), mobilising humanitarian funding from Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), and acting as the manager of the ERF. Both the CERF and ERF, under the RC/HC's leadership, have track records of supporting recurrent emergencies linked to hostilities as well as weather-related events.

OCHA and UNDP support the UN Working Group on DRR, under the RC/HC, which aims at effectively linking humanitarian and development initiatives. The UN Working Group on DRR has contributed to shaping and preparing the ToRs for the UNDAC DRP mission.

The need to address the discrepancy between the contingency planning led by the national authorities, and the contingency planning

led by the HCT was a key finding of a HCT workshop, that was held along with the PCD and the Swedish Civil Contingency Agency, with OCHA support, in June 2013. The workshop aimed at strengthening the capacity of the national actors to respond to disasters, at enhancing the preparedness of the national response system, and at improving links with international actors, including the HCT.

A HCT simulation exercise held in November 2013, co-organised by WFP and OCHA, enabled the practicing of a response to a simulation of multiple emergencies in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, in an effective and coordinated manner. This exercise tested the existing HCT contingency plan and assessed the strengths and weaknesses of the current coordination structures. It was seen as very important to develop protocols around coordination, information sharing, response (that contains the definition of focal points), the roles and responsibilities of the different Government of Israel/Palestinian authorities, and also including the role of the international community. It was proposed to organise a joint simulation exercise in 2014 (also in the Gaza Strip) with the relevant Palestinian authorities.

Humanitarian aid and international assistance is fragmented in large scale disaster response (as in the Gaza War of 2008/2009) which leads to challenges in managing the aid distribution effectively. There is a lack of a coordinated approach to disaster response that brings together the HCT and National Response Teams, which also leads to duplication of efforts, gaps in addressing certain areas, and deficiency in information flow and management.

Recommendation

1. Map local-level initiatives already in place, and coping mechanisms, good practices and tools that could be scaled up and used elsewhere for local resilience and preparedness. Consider involving the Working Group on Resilience co-chaired by FAO and Save the Children.

3.1.2 Link to Israel

Description of the current system

Key stakeholders in addressing an emergency situation in Palestine include the Israeli authorities, the Palestinian Authority and, regarding Gaza, Egypt. Israel has designated the Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories Unit (COGAT, a department of the Israeli Defence Force) as the party responsible for implementing all Israeli policies in Gaza and the West Bank. The Palestinian Authority operates under tight working arrangements that originate in the Oslo Accords in 1993 (that divided the West Bank into Areas A, B and C). While the Palestinian Authority was granted certain responsibilities over areas A and B (generally around built-up Palestinian areas), Israel retained full security and administrative control in Area C, which represents 60% of the West Bank. Area C is the only contiguous area of the West Bank separating areas designated as Area and B. As a result, often, in order to travel from one village to another, transit through the Israeli controlled Area C is required. Additionally, Israel also controls all land crossings and entry points to the West Bank, meaning that no goods or people can enter or move within the West Bank unless approved by Israel. In the case of Gaza, the Israeli and Egyptian authorities have control over the access of people and goods by sea and land, however, once inside Gaza and away from Gaza's boundaries, the local authorities control movement.

In medium to small scale emergencies, such as the Winter Storms, the first responders in Areas A and B are the PCD and the PRCS. Palestinian institutions follow a system of coordination with COGAT when responding in or passing through Area C, with requests being passed along by Palestinian liaison officers. COGAT is responsible for access to and within the West Bank, and within COGAT there is an element responsible for overseeing the whole West Bank and the District Coordination Offices (DCOs), who are in charge of the coordination at the district level. The time and effort that is required to effectively coordinate with the relevant Israeli institutions in emergencies has led to delays, which is an issue when activities are time-critical, such as search and rescue operations and medical evacuations.

There were some instances of positive cooperation between Israeli authorities and Palestinian counterparts in the context of the winter storms, as well as with international organisations, such as the access agreement for Firing Zone 918 which allowed for the rehabilitation of basic social infrastructure following Winter Storm Alexa. The existing mechanisms do not include a specific emergency coordination procedure and, in times of emergency, all that happens is that the existing coordination process is expedited. This process is often unreliable, unpredictable, and reliant upon personal relationships which affect the ability of relevant Palestinian institutions to respond to emergencies in time. Examples often used to illustrate this difficulty are the delays experienced when coordinating Palestinian police, fire engines or ambulance services' access through and to Area C. Therefore, rescue personnel often end up using civilian vehicles to access emergency areas, resorting to an unofficial response structure. In this context, volunteers and community level responders become the first line of response in small or medium scale emergencies.

As some essential equipment may be restricted or delayed at times of emergency, due to security considerations that require lengthy application and consideration processes for importation to the West Bank and Gaza, pre-positioning of this equipment is important. Currently there is very little pre-positioned equipment in the West Bank or the Gaza Strip. In a meeting with the UNDAC mission, COGAT was willing to consider having certain equipment used in emergency operations pre-cleared in order to expedite emergency entry procedures. The main entry points to the West Bank in the case of a natural disaster would be the King Hussein Bridge (also known as "Allenby Bridge") for goods and personnel coming from Jordan, and through Ben Gurion Airport close to Tel-Aviv in Israel. In the case of a large scale disaster, airports and access points could be burdened by incoming teams and equipment, which may overwhelm existing capacity mainly due to the lengthy coordination and clearance procedures.

Under the UN RC/HC the UN Access Coordination Unit (ACU) would be in charge of access coordination, while OCHA would support the coordination of the inter-cluster assessments, coordination of emergency response, inter-cluster reporting and resource mobilisation, as defined by the HCT Contingency Plan. The ACU would be in charge of facilitating access via COGAT and their subordinate elements down to DCO level. They would also work closely with the relevant Israeli authorities to establish the RDCs so as to enable the arrival of international assistance; if relevant, the ACU in disaster management operations would serve as liaison in the RDC and the OSOCC. In the context of a large scale disaster there is no plan that includes the arrival and support for incoming international teams, irrespective of whether the teams are deployed under bilateral or multilateral arrangements.

The coordination of the movement of people and particularly a mass movement of population or a large amount of persons, including for emergency medical treatment, would be highly difficult and also require prior discussions and planning. Currently there is no comprehensive plan for mass evacuation of either population or an identified organisation responsible to lead such an operation. While, under international humanitarian law, the Israeli authorities have obligations towards the Palestinian communities, there is a common understanding that COGAT and the Israeli Defense Force would primarily focus into responding to the Israeli population located in the settlements. There is also concern that given security concerns, Israel and Egypt may not allow large numbers of Palestinians to enter their territory. It would be important that standard operating procedures and exceptional coordination arrangements are in place to respond to a large scale disaster scenario; otherwise, improvisation when a disaster occurs could lead to loss of lives.

The Gaza Strip

International assistance for the Gaza Strip would have to be primarily coordinated via Israel, who exert control over the land and sea access to Gaza through a blockade and long-standing access restrictions, the most severe of which have been in place since 2007. Also, coordination is required with Egypt as past experiences (Cast Lead in 2008/2009 and Pillar of Defense 2012) showed that part of the humanitarian assistance was coordinated between the Egyptian Red Crescent and PRCS to enter Gaza. Since July 2013, as result of the political change in Egypt the main official crossing to Egypt, Rafah, has been open only sporadically and for limited categories of people. There is no official crossing for goods into Gaza from Egypt, with some exceptions on the use of Rafah for goods for Qatari-funded projects and small humanitarian convoys carrying donations. Physical infrastructure at all Gaza crossings is capable of supporting significant movement of goods and people, however, the policies and procedures in place limit the quantities that can cross. A protocol on emergency access would standardise the processes for getting teams and equipment in and out of the Gaza Strip through both Israeli and Egyptian crossings.

The way forward

The coordination of incoming humanitarian assistance to the West Bank and Gaza represents a significant challenge. As described above, the Israeli authorities are in charge of all decisions related to the access of people and goods in and out of the West Bank and Gaza; at the same time, the lack a comprehensive policy on disaster response and preparedness, as well as a contingency plan for national disasters, will affect emergency response.

An interesting development is the existing dialogue between Jordanian, Israeli and Palestinian Authorities on emergency management and disaster response under a UN-facilitated effort called "Professional Dialogue." This dialogue was initiated to encourage a closer collaboration for the bridging of the existing emergency response challenges related to both daily emergencies and large-scale disasters. Technical representatives of the three authorities are cooperating on issues such as training, exercises, knowledge exchange and coordination and discussions on movement of personnel and equipment accompanying USAR teams are on-going with reference to the recommendation in the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG) Guidelines.

Plans for movement of emergency providers and relief items, including situations calling for mass evacuation in the case of a disaster should be developed to include Jordan,

Israel and Palestine. Furthermore, the Israeli and Palestinian authorities should develop a comprehensive contingency plan for the case of a natural disaster.

To ensure the smooth flow of teams and goods across the borders, a protocol on access in natural disasters between the UN, and the Israeli and Palestinian authorities would be most valuable should they be urgently developed. The protocol has to cover issues like immigration, customs, logistics and access issues into and within the Palestinian territory. The "Professional Dialogue" framework for emergency preparedness and response could be seen as a positive step towards solving the most urgent issues of coordination between Israel, Palestine and Jordan. The importance of including Egypt in this type of preparedness discussion was also emphasised during the UNDAC mission.

Recommendations

1. It is recommended that the Palestinian authorities develop a comprehensive policy on emergency response that should encompass coordination with the relevant Israeli authorities (short term) and the UN as relevant.
   - In the context of this policy, for instances of natural disasters, a contingency plan could be developed by the Palestinian authorities in collaboration with the Israeli authorities, taking into account the possible international capabilities (short to medium term).
   - Foreseeing potential logistical issues regarding in-coming equipment, it would be valuable for the Palestinian authorities to develop a priority list of emergency equipment, in cooperation with the UN, which could then be used for discussions with COGAT to preposition critical equipment (including spare-parts) required for delivery of essential services. A Close collaboration with the UN in this regard to be considered (short term).
   - The INSARAG Guidelines and the Guidelines on the Use of Foreign Military and Civil Defence Assets in Disaster Relief ("The Oslo Guidelines") could be used by the Palestinian authorities as they endeavour to clarify issues with COGAT, such as regarding the influx of equipment, the volume and flow of USAR teams, and the development of protocols and coordination purposes (short term).
2. Given the geographic situation of the Gaza Strip, it is advised that the Palestinian authorities develop standard operating procedures on emergency preparedness with the Egyptian authorities (short to medium term).
3. Under the auspices of the "Professional Dialogue":
   - The Palestinian authorities could utilise the dialogue to develop standard operating procedures with the Israeli authorities and Government of Jordan on the issue of access in cases of natural disaster. This would address issues such as personnel, logistics, relief items, mass evacuation and security, both for the Gaza Strip and for the West Bank (short term).
   - The training proposed within the dialogue could be used to test procedures between the three states for a disaster situation, building upon agreed international mechanisms with the aim of developing standard operating procedures (short to medium term).

3.2. Current capacity and capability of the emergency services

There is no overarching document describing the national incident management system. The fire and rescue services sit with the PCD, while the medical services (including ambulance) sit with the PRCS and the MoH. There are three types of main operations centres: 100 Operations Centre for police, 101 Operations Centre for medical, and 102 Operations Centre for fire and rescue. There is no automatic communication system between these three centres and that causes time to be lost in responses.

The key challenges identified were (i) the analysis of institutional capacity, (ii) comprehensive integrated planning at all levels, and (iii), the assessment, training and central response capacity. There are some semi-structured assessment teams composed of the PCD, the PRCS and the police. However, there are no clearly identified common assessment methods at the local or national level, nor standard operating procedures for the analysis of assessment outcomes between the local and national levels. There is a need for capacity building and a better understanding of assessments.

There is some level of corporate training by different responders; however, it is not adequate, nor sufficiently advanced, for all levels of responders. Training for all levels is missing, such as that for decision makers, for trainers, for the continuous evaluation of the training programmes, and on systems and technologies with a holistic approach. Standardised training curriculum across the West Bank is another challenge. Regular exercises testing the existing inter-agency and individual plans, and the updating of these plans through systematic evaluations, are lacking. There is a need for continuous support in the development of adequate training facilities, including a training field.

The types, quantity, maintenance systems, and levels of equipment across all of the emergency response agencies is a common challenge. The capacity to respond to simultaneous and/or major emergencies is limited, particularly due to a lack of sufficient equipment. Support from the private sector in the form of equipment and logistics has been channelled in past emergencies – this has been a good practice. However, there is a need to better regulate and structure this practice and how to utilise it in contingency plans. The access issue hinders the full utilisation of different response organisations' equipment capacities.

A large body of lessons learnt and emergency management knowledge exists within the institutions and individuals across Gaza and the West Bank. However, this knowledge is not systematically shared and thus it does not transfer into institutional knowledge. Therefore, it cannot be used to implement better practices, plans, procedures and training. Donors run projects related to emergency management with different national actors. The efficiency of mainstreaming the knowledge transferred through these projects should be further investigated.

Although information management systems exist, they are not all capable of delivering appropriate information products to assist decision makers. Operational systems are based on incident management rather than a disaster response information management approach. Although the dispatch centres seem to have operational reporting procedures in place, the communication and information sharing procedures are manual and not simultaneously managed. There is a lack of a coordinated approach to disaster response information management that brings together the HCT and national response teams.

Almost all the emergency services lack sufficient levels of financial means. This limits their capacity to respond. There is no national/central emergency response team that the governorates can call up in the case of their resources and capacities being overwhelmed by an emergency. While there were no particular meetings or discussions held focusing on the response to any nuclear accidents, it was observed that there was not sufficient capacity to respond and protect the population from such emergencies although detection of nuclear radiation and evacuation are defined responsibilities under Civil Defence Law No. 3.

Recommendations

1. Strengthen the programme already in progress to train and equip local responders (male and female volunteers), in partnership with the PRCS and the PCD.
2. Inter-agency platforms to collect, analyse and process lessons learnt after incidents and exercises should be improved.
3. A comprehensive assessment of training capacities and facilities across all response agencies should be executed and a standardised training structures and gender-sensitive curriculums across sectors and agencies should be developed.
4. Training for all levels including decision makers, training of trainers and a continuous evaluation of the training programmes based on the changing needs, systems and technologies should be further developed with a holistic approach. Regular exercises should be planned to test the existing inter-agency and individual plans and then through systemic evaluations, these plans should be updated/amended.
5. Inter-agency and inter-sectoral exercises should be regularly practised, with potential involvement of international responders.
6. A comprehensive analysis of nationwide equipment capacity for all types of emergencies should be considered.
7. Interoperability of emergency capacities including equipment within governorates should be promoted.
8. An automatic information sharing system between 100, 101 and 102 operations centres should be established.
9. Improved information management systems and tools providing gender sensitive data on vulnerability, risk and capacity should be developed and included in relevant training and response mechanisms.
10. Early-warning systems should be reviewed in light of the overall risk analysis.
11. There is a need to make a comprehensive analysis of the nationwide institutional capacity and needs including infrastructure, equipment, contingency plans, information management and command-control structures.
12. There is a need for capacity building at different levels within the emergency response frame including contingency planning for preparedness and response.

3.2.1 Civil Defence, including Fire and Rescue Services

The PCD carry the functions of all acts of civil defence including preparation, fire, traffic accidents, search and rescue (however the fire services for Nablus and Hebron city centres are carried out by the municipalities). Under the MoI, the PCD takes its mandate and functions from Civil Defence Law No. 3. Their responsibilities cover both natural and man-made disasters. In the West Bank, there are 23 Civil Defence Centres with 1,170 staff serving approximately 2.5 million people. The PCD has a strategy for 2011-2014 that includes an analysis of the current situation, and their strengths and weaknesses, and overall goals and objectives. The PCD also carries out training activities for the public. The PCD does not have a medical response capacity or mandate, but they work closely with the PRCS for medical services.

At workshops carried out with several partners including the PCD in the North, Central and South West Bank and visits to PCD facilities, key challenges identified included the provision of an advanced training for all staff including decision makers, better and spare equipment, a further strengthened command and control structure to manage mass casualty incidents, the synchronisation and automation of information sharing systems, the development of databases, the improvement of operations centres, more comprehensive public training and awareness campaigns and improved operational cooperation with Israel.

There is cooperation on the inter-governorate level PCD Directorates. However, the lack of equipment, fragmented land and institutional capacity hinders its effectiveness and speed. It is further hampered by the PCD's lowered ability to control their response time to emergencies due to the fragmented land. While the Search and Rescue Training Centre in Jericho provides basic training, the facilities, equipment and training were observed to be in need of further strengthening.

The command and control structure of the PCD, with the dispatch centres, seems to be functioning. This proves that the operational reporting procedures are in place although the communication and information sharing procedures are manual and not simultaneously managed. At a visit to the Jericho Civil Defence Directorate, it was observed that they require spare equipment to respond to simultaneous events or major emergencies.

Regarding to gender-related issues linked to the various phases of a disaster, the PCD has established an independent gender unit that reports directly to the General Director of the PCD. The unit has identified its mission and role both as internal (within the PCD) and externally (in the functions of the PCD across the various stages of disaster management). This is a good development.

Recommendations

1. The PCD's capacity should be further strengthened with training, equipment and automated information systems.
2. The PCD should establish a local development department to better reach out the community for training and awareness.

3.2.2 Emergency health services

Health Services

The access to health services remains limited for the populations in the Gaza Strip, Area C, and some localities in areas A and B in the West Bank. To an extent, continued restrictions on movement and importation of medical supplies, equipment and medical staff are hindering essential health services.

Also within the health sector there has been a rapid evolution of disaster management over the last decade. The sector has adopted a comprehensive risk management approach, starting with risk analysis (including hazard mapping and assessment of the specific vulnerabilities and coping capacities).

There are four major health service providers in the State of Palestine: the MoH, UNRWA, the NGOs and the private providers. The MOH provides primary, secondary and some tertiary health services, and also purchase some tertiary services from private providers domestically and abroad.

The MoH includes the Emergency Disaster Unit, that is responsible for all phases of health related disasters, as well as mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery. The MoH recently hosted a workshop, supported by the World Health Organization (WHO), to develop health related emergency planning, with the intention of bringing all emergency actors together (including the PRCS, the PCD, the presidential staff, staff of the MoH etc.)

The MoH is showing a strong commitment to implementing the recommendations and outcomes of this workshop, and also in coordinating the development of a robust system for the provision of health care in the case of an emergency.

Health services (the Gaza Strip)

The MoH is the main actor in the provision and coordination of health services provided within the Gaza Strip. The MoH works closely with other stakeholders, such as the Palestinian Authority, UN agencies, international and national NGOs, and civil society groups. If an emergency arises, the MoH will activate their contingency plan upon the declaration of an emergency by the Higher Emergency Committee.

A large number of primary healthcare centres and hospitals exist throughout the Gaza Strip, in contrast to the limited space. This has provided some resilience in the case of protracted access issues arising from incursions by Israel. The future strategy of the MoH is looking at dividing the Gaza Strip into two or three areas, with duplicated services, to further strengthen the resilience in case of an emergency. Experiences from recent emergencies, like the flooding in December 2013, showed that the situation was well handled by the health sector, and with few fatalities, taking the constraints into consideration.

The health services are severely suffering from the longstanding restrictions and the blockade imposed by Israel on the movement of people and goods to, from and within the Gaza Strip. In addition the closing of the Egyptian border crossing and the tunnels (3 July 2013) has further accelerated the decline of baseline conditions for the health services and its ability to respond. Lack of fuel is a major issue also for the hospitals. Unstable electricity supply is damaging sensitive equipment in hospitals, for which there is already a lack of spare parts. There is limited access to essential

medicines and medical disposables, and the number of patient referrals to Israel or Egypt has been heavily reduced. Deterioration of other services, such as water and wastewater services, due to the blockade, in addition to the growing number of people living under economic constrains, exacerbates the poor health situation. Moreover, the lack of building materials has stopped 80% of the building projects of the MoH.

Ambulance service (West Bank and the Gaza Strip)

Medical transport between health facilities is the responsibility of MoH.

Regarding pre-hospital ambulance services, the PRCS is the only provider in within the State of Palestine. The PRCS are operating four 101 call centres, in Ramallah, Nablus, Hebron and Gaza, dispatching ambulances for daily emergencies. The call centres have a direct communication line to the territories' hospitals. In addition, the PRCSs' Disaster Management Unit (DMU) is running an operation room to follow up and monitor changes, assess capabilities in the field, and determine the extent of interventions and disaster response.

Following the Oslo Accords and the division of the West Bank into areas A, B, and C, each under a different jurisdiction, the restriction of movement has been problematic, especially in Area C which is under full Israeli control. In the event of a disaster, the ability to conduct emergency transportations (of injured people, casualties etc.) within Area C would be contingent on the particular area in which the transportation has to take place – for example, transportation within the Jordan Valley would be very difficult. ICRC would be responsible for the coordination with the Israelis regarding to movement and access.

Recommendations

1. **Health Services:** When contingency plans are in place, simulation exercises would have to be conducted to rehearse and test the plans. If possible, search and rescue/medical exercises should be undertaken with the Israeli and Jordanian authorities./
2. **Ambulance service (West Bank and Gaza Strip):** An automatic information sharing system between operations centres 101 and 102 should be established. Also, for Gaza, it would be important to facilitate the entry of PCD equipment, including ambulances.

3.2.3 Other critical communal services

In terms of critical communal service provision, civil society organisations, volunteers and private sector services are available. The role of volunteers at most levels and in the emergency service sectors are critical, particularly for the refugee camps, Area C, and, most importantly, in the Gaza Strip. Nevertheless, there appears to be a challenge in utilising their capacities due to issues with information sharing, coordination, and liaison functions. While some examples of community unions and professional unions responding to emergencies were observed, they were not fully integrated into the national response framework with clear roles, responsibilities and accountabilities. The private sector provides services, most notably in logistics, however, more structured support could be provided by the private sector in the form of specialised teams, equipment, technology, training, expertise, evacuation and personnel. The refugee camps are the best examples of the critical role of communal services.

Water and wastewater (the Gaza Strip)

Water and wastewater services would be critical in an emergency situation in the Gaza Strip. The Coastal Municipalities Water Utility (CMWU) is the service provider for all water and wastewater services throughout all of the Gaza Strip's governorates. Many of water and wastewater facilities were affected during the war of December 2008-January 2009, which meant that the CMWU to invoke their contingency plan so as to deal with emergency issues. The ongoing situation in relation to water and sanitation for the Gaza Strip is critical. Only 10% of the aquifer water is safe for drinking. The aquifers are being infiltrated by seawater due to the declining level of the groundwater. In addition, nitrates from uncontrolled sewage, and fertilisers from irrigation of farmland, are adding to the pollution.

Energy (the Gaza Strip)

The Gaza Strip is facing regular power cuts as the provision of electricity remains below demand, due to the Israeli imposed blockade of the Gaza Strip since 2007. The need of fuel, spare parts and construction material is crucial. Nearly all energy is provided by electricity and petroleum products, of which most is purchased from Israel. The situation has worsened since the closing of the Egyptian border in July 2013. The power cuts affect all levels of the community and health services, private homes, as well as the private sector, with many people left to depend on back-up generators. The use of generators and back-up generators is normally the case for most crucial facilities, but the lack of fuel, spare parts and equipment for these are the main challenges, as well as the high cost of fuel. The power cuts and the instability of the electricity distribution also have a knock-on effect on health, water and wastewater services.

Note: See Annex E for visual of the Power deficit in the Gaza Strip.

Shelter (the Gaza Strip)

Housing shortages in the Gaza Strip continue to increase, driven by military interventions, the Israeli restrictions on importing construction materials, and the rapid natural population growth. Reconstruction of housing has therefore been very difficult. The Gazan administration's ability to respond is weak due to the lack of resources; however the MoSA was able to provide shelter to families evacuated due to threat of flooding in the recent winter storm. The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), as the Shelter Sector lead for the Gaza Strip does not carry out shelter building. NRC also maintains the Unified Shelter Sector Database which contains comprehensive data on shelter needs and analysis in the Gaza Strip (www.sheltergaza.org).

Recommendations

1. A broader analysis of communal services at the local and national levels should be undertaken, and their roles should be well defined in the national response framework.
2. To overcome some the damaging consequences of the insufficient power supply, the construction of dual lines for critical capacities has been suggested.

3.2.3.1 Organisation and capacity of urban search and rescue units (if any)

The USAR service is provided by the PCD. They are in the process of establishing the Palestinian Search and Rescue Team (PSART) in cooperation with a USAR capacity building project of Sweden. UNDP also identified the need for USAR capacity development. The PCD does not have a long term strategy for the development of its USAR capacity, although the discussions taking place. Based on the INSARAG Guidelines, the PSART lacks the sufficient level of medical capacity, some search and rescue functions, some equipment, and some logistics capacity.

Due to the geographic fragmentation in the West Bank, it would be more efficient to have more than one USAR team located in the North, Central and South regions with the capacity of a medium USAR team, as defined at the INSARAG Guidelines. The development of any USAR capacity should be fully integrated into the overall PCD structure and be included in legally-structured cooperation agreements with all the partners, especially the PRCS. The key challenges identified were as follows: identifying a standard training curriculum across the West Bank; identifying standard operating procedures, roles and responsibilities; standardisation and regular practice of exercises; and, providing legal basis. A holistic approach to USAR capacity development is needed. The role of volunteers and local-level responders for light search and rescue functions are not utilised to a desired level, and this should be developed.

There have been some initiatives within the PRCS to develop USAR capacities globally. However, within the PRCS there is currently no plan to develop such teams within the State of Palestine, as they are already stretched in terms of capacity. However, capacity development should be considered, particularly for Area C.

Recommendations

1. There is a need to undertake a comprehensive assessment of training, equipment needs, and human resources; this should be followed by the development of USAR teams.
2. There is a need to develop, with the involvement of all stakeholders, an holistic USAR strategy, with a legal basis, as well as suitable USAR training facilities.

3.3 Disaster management information and emergency communications systems

Emergency communications

The system of emergency communications starts with public use of emergency numbers. As outlined above, these are connected to operations and dispatch centres at Police (100), the PRCS (101) or the PCD (102). The public appear to be well aware of these numbers.

Mobile phones are used as a secondary means of communication. Communication to the relevant resource is primarily done through VHF radio, which has limited range. Achieving longer range communication in a major emergency would rely on setting up repeater capacity; this would have to be agreed with the Israeli military authorities.

The PRCS operations centres are located at the governorate level in the West Bank. The PRCS operates with two types of centres: an operations room in Ramallah for larger cases covering Central West Bank, and dispatch centres for the day-to-day service in each governorate. The PRCS has produced a Fleet Management System. This shows the live location of each ambulance on a digital map. This software had been passed on to the other emergency services, but it is not clear if it has been implemented. The Ramallah PRCS operations room has one INMARSAT Mini-M satellite communications terminal. This system has end-of-life in September 2014 when the satellite service will be discontinued. There is no siren system in place for rapid warning of the general public. However there are no hazards likely that would require such a system.

In general it should be noted that all telecommunications in use by the Palestinian institutions, and other emergency response actors, are subject to general security considerations by Israel and could be potentially disrupted

Information management and needs assessment

The authorities do not have overall protocols for disaster-specific information management that would be appropriate for a large-scale emergency with multiple actors. At the governorate level, emergency centres do have standard operating procedures but these are oriented towards incident reporting rather than standardised collection and collation of disaster information.

There are no standardised disaster information products. The PCD does not have the ability to produce GIS mapping (although Hebron Governorate has a nascent GIS project that could be adapted for disaster response). WFP is working with the PCD to establish a web portal for disaster information, with both internal (intranet) and public-facing views. This has yet to be fully rolled out. OCHA has discussed a State of Palestine instance of the HumanitarianResponse.info web platform.

OCHA oPt has advanced information management systems and processes, and these could be used to support the Palestinian authorities in a major emergency. The information management capacity of the key humanitarian clusters was not assessed. The mission was presented with an on-line system used during Alexa Winter Storm (PCD, PRCS, OCHA and UNRWA) where pictures, assessment forms, text messages etc. are geo-referenced were immediately transfer to a server, UNOSAT was able to immediately produce common operational pictures which responders need during emergencies (see Annex F for Mission assessments map).

Many key disaster preparedness datasets (e.g. population statistics, vulnerability indicators) are held by the line Palestinian ministries and the PCBS. There is a lack of standardised data frameworks, however, most importantly in spatial data, such as a common gazetteer, place coding, and administrative boundaries for all levels of communities).

Some of the key findings are summarised as follows:

i. Emergency telecommunications:

- Even with a high number of daily cases, a training programme with technical and theoretical case studies should be developed for all levels of the emergency communication system
- A study should be undertaken of an eventual co-location of the operations centres at the governorate level. This will enhance the professionalism of the operators and provide a higher understanding of the cooperation and coordination of emergency response.
- The INMARSAT Mini-M system should be replaced with an up-to-date satellite communications terminal (such as the INMARSAT BGAN).

ii. Information management:

- The IM and Assessment WG of the HCT, as should be progressed, with appropriate linkages to the Palestinian Authority.
- OCHA should provide technical assistance to establish basic information management processes within the Palestinian emergency management system. This should include the implementation of new technologies, in so far as far as possible.
- In the event that HumanitarianResponse.info portal is used for the State of Palestine, consideration should be given to aligning the relevant content with the PCD's new web portal (which is being supported by WFP).
- In accordance with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) guidelines, OCHA should place copies of key Common Operational Datasets (CODs) on the online COD/ Fundamental Operational Dataset (FOD) Registry, and should advocate to the Palestinian Authority's agencies to list their key datasets on the registry.

iii. Ensure that public awareness-building on hazards and risk mitigation is implemented in all disaster risk management activities at the national and local levels. This should give special attention to the most vulnerable groups.

3.4 The system for procurement, warehousing and management of relief items in the event of a disaster

While considerable issues exist around access in emergencies to relief assistance, physical resources for logistics are unlikely to pose a severe constraint on emergency response. Coordination of logistical operations will need to be done carefully, with clear responsibilities assigned for the various elements of the supply chain. The PCD is well placed to coordinate road clearance operations, although it lacks heavy equipment for this purpose. Relevant ministries would need to procure relevant transport resources from the private sector. Adequate private capacity exists, however there are some procurement issues, including uncertainties over insurance cover and payment of commercial fees.

International logistics support includes the resources of UNRWA. The Logistics Cluster would only be activated in times of emergency; it is coordinated by WFP who, as the global cluster lead, are also the "provider of last resort."

The PRCS operates several warehouses in the West Bank, as do WFP (though their partner NGO). Food distribution networks exist through UNRWA, WFP and the MoSA.

Access remains the major issue in emergency logistics, most extremely in the case of the Gaza Strip. WFP and the Access Coordination Unit (ACU) now have a cooperation agreement to facilitate emergency access of humanitarian relief in the context of a large scale emergency.

Management of relief items in the event of a disaster (also see 2.6)

At the moment, it is difficult to get money for procurement as there is only 1% of the ministries' budget allocated for disaster response. There is a need for a decentralised disaster fund at the governorate level for procurement, and also for preparedness and preventative measures. This fund also could be used for reimbursement of the expenditures and for the use of private equipment; enforcement for usage is possible according to Civil Defence Law No. 3.

Another problem came up in one of the local workshops was that, at present, the insurance companies will not pay in the case of an emergency. As a result, a national emergency fund will be useful to cover these potential costs.

For incoming relief items/teams there are at the moment only limited areas – Tel Aviv and Allenby Bridge/Jordan to the West bank, and the Erez Crossing to the Gaza Strip. There are no regulations for relief items nor relief teams (USAR) in place on the Palestinian side, nor on Israeli side. The only way is to get permission from Israel is via COGAT the. The role of the ACU in emergencies is reflected under 3.1, it would be particularly useful to consider having an ACU officer at the RDC) and/or at the On-Site Operations Coordination Centre (OSOCC). At the moment, there is a need foreseen for one Liaison Officer per district in the West Bank, but due to the capacity of personnel, it is unlikely that one per district is feasible.

Due to security regulations as well as limited movement lines (if roads are blocked) there is a need to preposition relief items at all levels. There is a need for more equipment (vehicles, communications, devices for firefighting, generators, pumps, snow removal etc.) especially at governorate level as well as municipal, village and refugee camp level. One option could be to preposition relief items at a UN compound, as this could be an easier way of attaining permission for the transport

of such goods into the State of Palestine. COGAT indicated that it would be very useful to get an overview of how a relief operation at international level works; for instance, so that they could get an idea as to what types of equipment they would have to expect in the case of incoming an international assistance.

Recommendations

1. National level emergency planning should set clear responsibilities for different aspects of logistics.
2. WFP's continued technical advice on logistical matters should continue (to the PCD and other elements of the national emergency management system).
3. The PCD should continue to focus on physical clearance of roads and provision/delivery of life-saving equipment. The use of portable warehouses should be considered.
4. A new emergency fund (non-centralised) should be set-up as described above.
5. Develop procurement procedures for emergency relief items (same types for interoperability in all governorates etc.)
6. Prepare guidelines for Host Nation Support at all levels.[9]
7. ECHO to provide Host Nation Support guidelines to both authorities for international support.
8. Include Host Nation Support in new legislation, and contingency as well as emergency plans.
9. Prepare and train decision makers in INSARAG, OSOCC Guidelines and UNDAC as well as the European Union Civil Protection Mechanism.
10. OCHA to provide INSARAG and OSOCC Guidelines to both authorities so that they would have information about possible incoming relief items/teams.

3.5 Liaison and coordination with other national actors, donor agencies, international organisations, NGOs, Red Crescent, and the private sector in mitigation, preparedness response and recovery

The lack of an overall regulated institution to develop, oversee, and implement longer-term disaster risk management in Palestine makes the participation of different actors inconsistent across the national and local levels. While the establishment of the Unity technocratic government could facilitate coordination; the pre-existing political and institutional split between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, have prompted that the governorates present different approaches in liaising and coordinating with international and national partners in the roles and responsibilities for mitigation, preparedness, emergency response and recovery. As a consequence there is no platform for the donor community in Palestine to engage strategically in supporting a disaster risk management approach, while efforts have been directed to supporting specific emergency response projects.

Based on the experience of the two Winter Storms in 2013, those emergencies highlighted a general inclination, both in the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip, to act in response to a disaster event; however, preparedness and recovery were less systematically addressed. During the two storms, while the PCD and the PRCS mounted the emergency response, their cooperation/complementary levels varied per governorate). Also, the role of the private

sector and the national and international NGOs depended greatly on the existing coordination arrangements prior to the emergency.

The HCT implemented during 2013, a total of 30 project proposals were submitted to the ERF for a total amount of US$ 6.1 million, of which 21 for nearly US$ 4 million were approved. Almost 1.4 million people benefited from ERF funded projects in 2013 (19.5% girls, 21 % women, 19.5 boys and 40% men). While recently the ERF has started to consider a minimum percentage of funding for preparedness, a broader strategic approach to preparedness, particularly at the community level, was lacking. During Winter Storm Alexa, the MoPWH (both in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank) and some Governorates closely coordinated with the private sector. However, it was noted that the lack of pre-existing memoranda of understanding delayed the mobilisation of privately owned assets during the emergency.

Lessons learned of the January Winter Storm led to two interesting developments in the coordination and cooperation between the national and international partners. In terms of preparedness in the West Bank, OCHA, UNRWA, the PRCS and the PCD worked on a coordinated online system of information management in close coordination with the Governorates (see section.3.3.) so as to improve emergency response and to ensure coordinated assistance.

Post-disaster recovery was also activated during the immediate response to Storm Alexa – under MOPAD's lead a World Bank Rapid Damage and Loss Assessment was mobilized, also with the support of the European Union and the UN. The MOPAD-World Bank assessment noted the continuous need to build institutional and monitoring structures for long-term disaster risk management activities.

Recommendations

1. Create a new structure for disaster risk management, as suggested in the Appendix.
2. Acknowledge the inclusion of preparedness as a key area within emergency response. The recent inclusion of 5% of the budget in the ERF is a good practice in this regard.
3. Engage with the donor community to ensure a sustained approach to disaster risk management, including at the community level.
4. Equip the new structure with a strategic preparedness plan focusing on building capacity and profiling risks at national and governorate levels.
5. Support disaster risk management authorities in the development of communication procedures with the international and donor communities. The procedures will support the harmonisation and engagement processes of all agencies in the implementation of risk management strategic plans.
6. Introduce international coordination tools for the national authorities and develop joint, and agreed, coordination standard operation procedures.
7. Support disaster risk management structures in the development of a monitoring system to enhance proper and effective coordination at the national level for the various actors.
8. To mobilise the private sector for disaster risk management it is recommended (i) to identify and map their capacities; (ii) to define their roles and responsibilities before and during disasters; (iii) to raise their level of awareness on risk reduction projects; (iv) to involve them in monitoring risks and hazards; (v) to conduct regular consultation meetings with their representatives to discuss risk reduction projects and programmes; and (vi) to establish coordination mechanisms with the private sector, such as joint working groups, and to involve their representatives in the DRR committees and governorate levels.

4 Disaster contingency planning, monitoring, damage assessments and need analysis capacity

4.1. Monitoring and early warning systems, including the role of scientific institutions in monitoring of possible adverse events

The An-Najah National University and the Palestine Meteorology Centre conduct monitoring and early warning activities in the State of Palestine on earthquakes and floods.

Recommendations

1. Information on capacities and responsibilities of each monitoring agency need to be disseminated to Palestinian Authority agencies mandated for emergency service provision so as to ensure appropriate response and safety to the public at large in an emergency.
2. Upgrading of equipment should be systematically programmed by monitoring agencies.
3. HCCD and NDRMFPC should play a coordinated role and encourage initiatives by monitoring agencies in community-based early warning. This should be implemented with the communities and the involvement of the HCCD.

4.2. Damage assessment and needs analysis capacity at the national and local levels; to include procedures for incorporating relevant national actors

Pre-emergency vulnerability assessments have been undertaken periodically by several actors, including OCHA, such as the VPP. A group of NGOs, as part of AIDA, is currently launching a community vulnerability and resilience assessment system for some areas of the West Bank, which has received ECHO funding.

There is no standardised approach for damage and needs assessment by Palestinian Authority agencies. However, a local-level assessment method was conceived in preparedness for the December 2013 storm and used in response. OCHA developed a database and an online visualisation tool for this. The online tool was used by the national authorities in the West Bank, by clusters, governorates and NGOs, who reported it was very useful to generate a common situational picture at a national and governorate level. However, it only covers communities in Area C.

OCHA and the humanitarian clusters have included the adoption of a harmonised post-disaster method based on the Multi Cluster/Sector Initial Rapid Assessment (MIRA) approach as part of the Assessment and IM Working Group. This is an important step forward in terms of preparedness.

Emergency transportation system during the time of a disaster (injured, dead, evacuees and aid staff)

The transportation services are mainly provided by the PRCS, as explained under the emergency health services. The challenges and

recommendations related to these services are explained under the relevant chapters.

The evacuation of population is a key point. The Civil Defence Law No. 3 describes civil defence as a set of procedures necessary for the protection of civilians and their property including ensuring the safety of all types of transportation. It appears that the ministries, response agencies, such as the PCD, and the security forces have limited transport capacity and faces challenges related to access – this needs to be better planned, especially taking into consideration that evacuation is a major undertaking. The ground should be prepared with Israel so as to facilitate access, and linkages to the private sector should be investigated, and public awareness should be improved.

Recommendations

1. The HCT Assessment and IM WG should coordinate and harmonise assessment programmes for the humanitarian community. The establishment of a PDRMC would facilitate the coordination with the Palestinian authorities (if this is set-up) and the HCT.
2. The online local-level assessment tool should be retained and developed further by OCHA in partnership with the relevant authorities. It should be extended to cover communities in Areas A and B as soon as is feasible.
3. OCHA and the cluster lead agencies should develop a common rapid assessment model based on the MIRA model, involving relevant Palestinian Authority agencies.
4. Continue to build on the VPP in Area C and consider extending it to cover other areas. Use this as a basis for implementing long-term measures to reduce vulnerabilities at the local level. Involve all relevant actors including NGOs, women's organisations and civil society.
5. Develop a national emergency transportation strategy, in cooperation with the PRCS and the private sector and in discussion with the Government of Israel, as a part of national emergency response framework.

4.3 Disaster contingency planning systems

At present there is no national contingency plan in the State of Palestine. The people interviewed at the Palestinian institutions, governorate, municipality, and in the refugee camps – some of whom have plans similar to contingency plans, but there is no overarching plan – recognised the need for contingency plans to be developed.[10]

There is no repository or coordination at the central level of the contingency plans developed in the ministries and the PCD. There is also a need for emergency plans for public buildings as well as awareness training for emergencies at all levels in the civil society.

The PCD has prepared a National Disaster Management Plan, which was distributed to all relevant bodies (ministries and key stakeholders), but there were no replies from them. The plan includes roles and responsibilities for different stakeholders. The plan lacks expected scenarios, standard operating procedures, and coordination structures for the response operations at all levels. The PCD conducted evacuation exercises for local and national authorities' institutions and selected schools, and this was understood by the authorities to be exercise of a contingency plan. Hence, this means that there is misunderstanding of what a

contingency plan is. On the other hand, the PRCS developed a contingency plan based on expected scenarios, and they conducted joint exercises in cooperation with MoH and the PCD.

The operation rooms established in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip aim to coordinate response operations but they do not have the civil protection tools or the standard operating procedures to coordinate response operations. Each municipality or governorate operation rooms coordinate their sectorial responsibilities. The operation rooms do not have clear and agreed standard operating procedures, with the result that they need to establish communication procedures between the existing operation rooms so that they are linked with local-level organisations.

All institutions highlighted the importance of conducting three-dimensional simulation exercises – that is:

i. Simulation exercises at the institution level so as to estimate the standard.

ii. Joint exercises with relevant organisations or ministries with whom there are commonalities of roles and responsibilities.

iii. Participate in exercises at the national level.

The HCT and the various UN agencies have developed their own contingency plans, but, as these are not aligned with the Palestinian Authority's plans, there is a need to integrate the HCT with the national authorities so as to create a national plan. The sectors/clusters are also starting to develop their contingency plan, which represents an opportunity to further engage with the national authorities on coordination arrangements and standard operating procedures.

Current contingency plans have been tested often on smaller, localised emergencies. Access restrictions can usually be worked around in such cases. However, the access issue for a severe, wide-area disaster has not been fully addressed in contingency plans. The role of Israel in such contingencies remains a unknown and would require a dialogue that would build on agreed scenarios.

The fragmentation of the territory of the State of Palestine (due to access restrictions), and of the national authorities (due to political division), is a major reason for the need for the implementation of a contingency plan. National and international contingency plans have not been fully aligned and this risks creating gaps and overlaps in any major disaster response.

Contingency planning at the various levels should be aligned in crucial areas, including cross-border. This can be achieved through the adoption of common standard operating procedures, communication protocols and joint exercises at all levels.

Special attention is needed for areas like refugee camps, Area C and Seam Zone. These areas, and contingency planning for them, have to be discussed between all of relevant actors involved, including the Israeli authorities and UNRWA.

Outline guidance for the preparation of a contingency plan

For the development of a general format for a national disaster response plan, as well as emergency plans:

i. Name of contingency plan of the village, governorate, Palestinian Authority.

ii. Context; humanitarian country profile.

iii. Guiding principles for response for the involved organisations and social society.

iv. Risk analysis.

v. Agreed scenarios and triggers.

vi. Standard operation procedures for each scenario that includes guidance for each ministry and national authority.

vii. Definitions, including definitions of what would trigger an emergency response.

viii. List of Palestinian Authority, and other organisations/individuals, that can provide disaster relief.

ix. Mandate and coordination mechanisms and structure.

x. Roles and responsibilities of the organisations and civil society organisations involved (including checklist: who does what, when and where).

xi. List of all available means in a case of a disaster, including location and details about the owner or person in charge and their approachability.

xii. List of measures, which have to be fulfilled in case of an emergency, especially an alert plan as well as guidance as to measures that have to be taken in an emergency according to legal regulations.

xiii. Date of development of the contingency plan as well as remarks about checks and the latest update:

a. Agreed emergency contact list.

b. Reallocation plans.

c. Monitoring and evaluation system also procedures.

d. Awareness building measures (Information of population, trainings, exercises etc.)

Data and information to be included in the emergency plans:

i. Internal emergency plans:

a. Names or positions of persons authorised to set emergency procedures in motion and the person in charge of, and coordinating, the on-site migratory action.

b. Name or position of the person with responsibility for liaising with the authority responsible for the external emergency plan.

c. For foreseeable conditions or events which could be significant in bringing about a major accident, a description of the action which should be taken to control the conditions or events and to limit their consequences, including a description of the safety equipment and the resources available. Arrangements for limiting the risks to persons on-site including how warnings are to be given and the actions persons are expected to take on receiving a warning.

d. Arrangements for providing an early warning of the incident to the authority responsible for setting the external emergency plan in motion, the type of information which should be contained in an initial warning and the arrangements for the provision of more detailed information as it becomes available.

e. Arrangements for training staff in the duties they will be expected to perform, and where necessary coordinating this with off-site emergency services.

f. Arrangements for providing assistance with off-site mitigatory action.

ii. External emergency plans:

a. Names or positions of persons authorised to set emergency procedures in motion and of persons authorised to take charge of and coordinate offsite action.

b. Arrangements for receiving early warning of incidents, and alert and callout procedures.

c. Arrangements for coordinating resources necessary to implement the external emergency plan.

d. Arrangements for providing assistance with on-site mitigatory action.

e. Arrangements for off-site mitigatory action.

f. Arrangements for providing the public with specific information relating to the accident and the behaviour which it should adopt.

g. Arrangements for the provision of information to the emergency services of other states in the event of a major accident with possible transboundary consequences.

Recommendations

1. Contingency plans, with a gender-sensitive resilience building focus at the local level, could prepare communities to better react to sudden emergencies; meanwhile, larger scale assistance could be made available. This recommendation could be applied particularly for those communities that are most vulnerable and face the hardest access restrictions.
2. Contingency planning based on a multi-hazard analysis to be developed in the future NEC, which would guide the contingency planning of the governorate and municipality levels. There is need to ensure the clear definition of roles and responsibilities, standard operating procedures, stocks, and emergency funding tools.
3. The event of a larger scale disaster should involve the relevant Israeli authorities in the discussions on contingency planning to ensure that there is some predictability in the organisation of the response, particularly because it would involve international response mechanisms. This contingency planning should take place under the framework of the Professional Dialogue.
4. Acknowledge the inclusion of preparedness as a key area within emergency response. The recent inclusion of 5% of the budget in the OCHA managed ERF is a good practice in this regard.

4.4 Plan activation procedures

In case of an emergency, the above mentioned national contingency plan, as well as emergency plans, would be activated at the different levels by the President at the national level, by the governors at the governorate level, and the local committees at the local level.

These steps should be codified in the new legislation, as activation is key and will lead to the necessary measures being taken at each of the levels. A special alert mechanism must be put in place in the different plans so as to activate all of the relevant organisations. At the national level, the President can declare a State of Emergency (Art 110 Amended Basic Law); the governors must be in accordance with the national plan to activate it. The plans at all levels must be interlinked and tested in real time so as to find the weak points in the system, and then adapted accordingly.

Principles and information on the management system and the organisation of the establishment with a view to the prevention of major accidents

For implementing the operator's major accident prevention policy and safety management system, account shall be taken of the following elements, and the requirements outlined in the document should be proportionate to the hazards:

i. The policy should be established in writing and should include the operator's overall aims and principles of action with respect to the control of hazards.

ii. The system should include the part of the general management system that includes the organisational structure, responsibilities, practices, procedures, processes and resources for determining and implementing the prevention policy.

iii. The following issues shall be addressed by the system:

a. **Organisation and personnel:** The roles and responsibilities of personnel involved in the management of major hazards at all levels in the organisation. The identification of training needs of such personnel and the provision of the training so identified. The involvement of employees and of subcontracted personnel working in the establishment.

b. **Identification and evaluation of major hazards:** Adoption and implementation of procedures for systematically identifying major hazards arising from normal and abnormal operation and the assessment of their likelihood and severity.

c. **Operational control:** Adoption and implementation of procedures and instructions for safe operation, including maintenance, of plant, processes, equipment and temporary stoppages.

d. **Management of change:** Adoption and implementation of procedures for planning modifications to, or the design of new installations, processes or storage facilities.

e. **Planning for emergencies:** Adoption and implementation of procedures to identify foreseeable emergencies by systematic analysis, to prepare, test and review emergency plans to respond to such emergencies and to provide specific training for the staff concerned. Such training shall be given to all personnel working in the establishment, including relevant subcontracted personnel.

f. **Monitoring performance:** Adoption and implementation of procedures

for the ongoing assessment of compliance with the objectives set by the operator's major-accident policy and safety management system, and the mechanisms for investigation and taking corrective action in case of non-compliance. The procedures should cover the operator's system for reporting major accidents of near misses, particularly those involving failure of protective measures, and their investigation and follow-up on the basis of lessons learnt.

g. **Audit and review:** Adoption and implementation of procedures for periodic systematic assessment of the major-accident prevention policy and the effectiveness and suitability of the safety management system; the documented review of performance of the policy and safety management system and its updating by senior management.

Recommendations

1. Include activation in the legal framework and regulations.
2. Establish agreed communication system. (Eventually, the use of new technologies for assessments, information management, and decision making and linking them together in joint operation rooms). Example: use of UNOSAT LiveWebMap and ASIGN PRO (both were used during the mission), or similar products.
3. Develop common procedures for plans that connect the national level to local level.
4. Develop an alert system; and test its activation systems.

4.5. Training plans and execution

There are limited resources for training in disaster management methods at the technical and practical levels. However, several universities offer postgraduate courses in disaster management. At a grassroots level, the PRCS provides training in some aspects of emergency response, for example a camp run for youth in 2011, 2012, and 2013.

The PCD has a training centre in Jericho, which it operates with the support from the Kingdom of Jordan, while the PCD and UNWRA provide training at public schools and the refugee camps.

Nevertheless, there appears to be gaps in professional training for disaster management staff. While resources may be limited in the short term, it would be valuable to begin to plan for the establishment of a national curriculum for emergency management. This should cover a broad spectrum of risks, and focus on management processes as well as technical skills.

Recommendations

1. The NDRMFPC, if established, should set-up a working group to identify core competences and a training curriculum for emergency management.
2. The NDRMFPC should then consult with organisations that could deliver the specified training, for example, the universities through short courses.
3. Training should be provided at a local level but also for decision makers at all levels.

5 Public awareness and education

5.1. Arrangements for public education and awareness for population preparedness and suitable response to disasters at all levels

Besides the population, the decision makers in particular should be trained in disaster management.

Public awareness and education activities are carried out by several actors, including the ministries, response entities such as the PCD and the PRCS, academia, the UN agencies, the donors, civil society/youth organisations and national and international NGOs. These activities cover different parts of the State of Palestine, including rural areas and Area C.

All of the actors met had experience in training and exercises, although these efforts were fragmented to some degree. The activities had targeted several key components of society, such as schools, universities and mosques. Awareness building was conducted face-to-face, in groups and in the media. Some response agencies also trained a network of volunteers, including those at the refugee camps. Some actors met gave examples of human suffering due to the lack of people's awareness regarding what to do in preparation for, and response to, emergencies. This adds to the pressures on service providers and actors both in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

On the other hand, some good examples include the draft gender action plan of the PCD which aims to raise awareness in the community on gender issues in DRR, and to strengthen partnerships between the PCD and civil society organisations, including women's organisations, and to ensure gender sensitive voluntary groups training and mobilisation. In 2012, 20,000 women were trained as a result of a memorandum of understanding signed between the PCD and MoWA. As women constitute a large number of voluntary groups, especially in the West Bank, awareness activities targeting women, including those suitable for their needs and conditions, is a best practice.

The education cluster already considers "effective immediate response to recurrent small and large scale emergencies" as an outcome of the 2014 SRP for the State of Palestine. An interesting approach has been provided by a UNESCO programme aiming at making vulnerable schools in the Gaza Strip into safer spaces by adopting an integrated protection and education approach. The programme consist of a package of six main components: first aid; good safety practices, including school evacuation and preventing and putting out fires; training on human rights monitoring and reporting, with a specific focus on reporting for the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism; psychosocial activities focused on the use of learner centred methodologies and approaches; trainings in all schools on the minimum standards of the International Network for Education in Emergencies, with a specific view to developing school-based contingency plans to increase preparedness and the quality of local responses in emergencies; and the creation of an SMS alert system to allow school stakeholders (schools, the MoEHE, students and staff) to send and receive timely information regarding attacks

and incidents in the vicinity of the school.

The public awareness efforts should continue to be a central element of disaster risk management in the State of Palestine. However, it needs a holistic and strategic approach including all of the relevant national, local and international partners. Due to the specific living and land conditions of the Palestinians, no response plans will be complete without a minimum awareness level across all segments of the public. Particular focus should continue to be given to the most vulnerable segments of the population (including Area C, the separation barrier, East Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip and the refugee camps) and the most vulnerable groups (women, girls, Bedouins, youth and elderly).

Building public awareness could be seen as the first step in engaging the community in disaster management. Community Based Disaster Management is the best preparation to combat disasters. More investment should be invested in it by running awareness programmes and engaging the community in mapping hazards and vulnerabilities.

The role of media should be strengthened to ensure that media's key messages and awareness building role is in line with the national response framework. Strengthening

Recommendations

1. Public awareness efforts should be an integral and strategic part of all disaster preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery plans at the national and local levels. These efforts should continue to be supported by the international community.

Remarks on approach to implementation

In considering implementation of the UNDAC team's recommendations, the relevant Palestinian Authorities may wish to take into account the following comments:

- Disaster risk management, to be successful, must be a multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary practice. Gaps in the existing national framework for disaster risk management in the State of Palestine, and the absence of a comprehensive DRR policy, make it essential that changes to the existing mechanisms and legal frameworks involve participation and engagement from all stakeholders to ensure national ownership.
- All stakeholders organised within a technical team established to review DRR arrangements in the State of Palestine, as well as other actors like civil society, the international community and scientific institutes, need to collectively review existing studies, assessments and recommendations to draw-up an implementation plan based. It is important to have this plan also linked to international DRR agenda which is currently evolving for the post-2015 new international framework on DRR.

The implementation process should be built within a defined timeline. It is suggested that short term actions should ideally be implemented within a maximum of two years. Most of the medium and long term actions are dependent on completion of the short term actions.

Appendix

Possible scope of legislation for disaster risk management

the private sector's role in awareness building should be considered.

CHAPTER 1: IN GENERAL

A preamble that contains all the principles contained in the Governing Principles of this report, and also referring to Humanitarian Principles and International Humanitarian Law.

ART 1: PURPOSE OF THE LAW

ART 2: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1. Palestinian Disaster Risk Management Commission (PDRMC)

2.2. High Council of Civil Defence (HCCD) [National Emergency Council (NEC)]

2.3. National Disaster Risk Management Focal Point Committee (NDRMFPC)

2.4. National Emergency Operations and Support Centre (NEOSC) - including call centres

2.5. Governorate Disaster Risk Management Committees (GDRMCs)

2.6. Governorate Emergency Committees (GECs)

2.7. Governorate Joint Emergency Operations Rooms (GJEORs)

CHAPTER 2: MEASURES IN CIVIL PROTECTION

Art 3: Task of Civil Protection

3.1 Task of Civil Protection...

3.2 Definitions:

3.2.1 Disaster

3.2.2 Disaster Risk Reduction

3.2.3 Prevention

3.2.4 Preparedness

3.2.5 Risk management

3.2.6 Organisations for Civil Protection

3.2.7 State of Emergency

3.2.8 Sustainable Development etc.

Art 4: Prevention, preparedness and risk management

4.1. The Palestinian Authority, each governorate, municipalities, villages and Refugee Camps must prepare

a) Obligatory risk analysis

b) A contingency plan

c) External emergency plans for enterprises and facilities with special risk potential as well as public buildings

d) Set-up of disaster response guidance

e) Special organisational precautions for alerts

f) Provision of necessary equipment for disaster response

g) Guidance for training and public awareness measures as well as Civil protection exercises

h) Preparation for psycho-social care of affected population

i) Induction of citizens and volunteers in civil protection and terms of service

j) Obligations of vital/essential services for prevention, preparedness and response measures

k) All necessary steps in risk management (also linked to legal regulations of other ministries)

4.2. The PDRMC has to release necessary guidelines for measures in Art 3.1.a-k

Art 5: Monitoring and information measures

5.1 Early warning system

5.2 Alert mechanism and procedures

CHAPTER 3: MEASURES AFTER AN EMERGENCY

Art 6: State of Emergency

6.1. A national disaster will be declared by the President, at Governors level by the Governor. In a case of a force majeure

6.2. Evacuation clauses and procedure

ART 7: LEAD IN CIVIL PROTECTION RESPONSE

7.1. According to the size of the disaster

7.2. All necessary measures must be undertaken by [insert appropriate timeline]. Including use of inhabitants in immediate disaster response measures as well as the usage of private equipment.

7.3. Restrictions of movement in certain affected areas.

7.4. Cooperation and coordination of all essential services of Palestine

8. OBLIGATION OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN CIVIL PROTECTION DURING AN EMERGENCY

8.1. Reporting of incidents

8.2. Support in the operation in general (cooperation and coordination)

8.2.1. Obligation for citizens

8.2.2. Volunteer organisations

8.2.3. Private enterprises and requisition of property

8.2.4. Private equipment

8.2.5. NGOs

8.3. Force empowerment for necessary measures

9. INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT

9.1. Request for international assistance

9.2. Procedures for Host Nation Support

9.3 Linkage to international organisations and NGOs

CHAPTER 4: FINANCIAL

Art 10: Financial issues

10.1. General emergency budget

10.2. Special emergency budget at the different levels

10.3. Compensation for use of equipment

10.4. Waiver of liability for civil protection personnel in case of damage to third parties during their service

CHAPTER 5: FINAL REMARKS

Art 11. Closing remarks

11.1. Responsibilities in this law

11.2. Cooperation in Civil Protection

11.3. Law comes into force by [insert appropriate timeline] and replaces Civil Defence Law No. 3 (1998)

Annexes

Annex A	Terms of Reference
Annex B	Programme of field visits
Annex C	Briefing note on the Gaza Strip
Annex D	Natural hazards in the State of Palestine
Annex E	Power deficit in the Gaza Strip
Annex F	Mission assessments
Annex G	Mission plan
Annex H	Mission overview
Annex I	List of actors and meetings
Annex J	Flow of requests and assistance during large-scale incidents
Annex K	Organisational structure of national disaster management responders
Annex L	Nablus Earthquake Risk Zone and Refugee Camp

Annex A: Terms of Reference

The UNDAC Mission to the State of Palestine was tasked to work with the relevant authorities within the Palestinian Authorities, including the Presidential Technical Committee and the High Council of Civil Defence. The UNDAC mission was to consult with the UN agencies, the PRCS and NGOs and, as appropriate, and liaise with relevant Israeli authorities. OCHA Palestine and ROMENA were to play an active role in the mission. The mission was to be conducted under the overall leadership of the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator of the State of Palestine, to achieve the following results:

i. To review the capacities and functionalities of national entities, within the national disaster management system, of Palestine in relation to their ability to mitigate, prepare, respond and recover from emergencies, and to examine possible linkages to the international humanitarian system under the Humanitarian Coordinator of the State of Palestine.

ii. The UNDAC mission was to aim at formulating recommendations on the basis of the research, visits and interviews undertaken. The mission was to produce a mission report summarizing the analysis and conclusions, including recommendations towards strengthening the effectiveness of the national disaster management system that should be finalised before the end of the mission and submitted to the Government of Palestine and the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator.

iii. The UNDAC mission was to cover the following areas:

   a. Context:

      - A description of the Palestine-Israeli context
      - Guiding principles for the development of a national disaster management system
      - Risk analysis in the State of Palestine

   b. National Disaster Management Framework:

      - Overview of existing legal and institutional framework and mandate of the agencies responsible for national disaster management
      - Key actors in the State of Palestine Disaster Management Framework
      - Organizational structure at national, sub-national and municipal levels, including arrangement for UNWRA managed refugee camps
      - Definitions of disaster management used in Palestine and among key actors in the context of Palestine
      - Disaster Management and Risk Reduction Policies related to response and its implementation at national/governorates, municipalities/ villages and camp council level
      - Financial arrangements for developing and maintaining a disaster management system at national and subnational levels

   c. National and local disaster response capacity:

      - Coordination mechanism, including control/ operational facilities

- Current capacity and capability of Emergency Services:
    - Civil Defence, including Fire and Rescue Services
    - Emergency health services
    - Emergency transportation system during the time of a disaster (injured, dead, evacuees and aid staff)
    - Other critical communal services
    - Organization and capacity of urban search and rescue units (if any)

d. Disaster Management Information and emergency communications systems

- The system for procurement, warehousing and management of relief items in the event of a disaster
- Liaison and coordination with other national actors, donor agencies, International organisations, NGOs, Red Crescent, and the private sector in mitigation, preparedness response and recovery

e. Disaster contingency planning, monitoring, damage assessments and need analysis capacity:

- Monitoring and early warning systems, including the role of scientific institutions in monitoring of possible adverse events
- Damage assessment and needs analysis capacity at the national and local levels; to include procedures for incorporating relevant national actors
- Disaster contingency planning systems
- Plan activation procedures
- Training Plans and execution

f. Public awareness and education:

- Arrangements for public education and awareness for population preparedness and suitable response to disasters at all levels

Annex B: Programme of field visits

Date	Time	Location	Objective	Follow up- Responsible party
13-03-2014	1130 -1400	PCD	Preparatory meeting, ToR agenda	MJ, Iyad
19-03-2014	11:30	UNRCP	With UNDP/OCHA	MJ. Abdelqader, Husham, Iyad
20-03-2014		UNRCP	Agenda discussion and communications	OCHA – MJ, Majed, Nisreen, Iyad, Abdelqader
20-03-2014	17:15	UNSCO	Discussion of the agenda with the HC	MJTM
UNDAC Field Mission				
22/03/2014 Saturday		Ramallah	Arrival	List of UNDAC mission participants
23/03/2014 Sunday	09:00	President office/ Ramallah	Protocol meeting to present the mission's objectives Mission management team with chief of staff / PRESIDENT OFFICE	Terje, Abdelqader, Maria Jose,
	10:30	UNRCP – Ramallah	Internal briefings: OCHA	Catherine Cook Iyad Shwaikeh Maria Jose Torres
	12:00	UNRCP – Ramallah	Internal briefings: DSS	TBC (Nabil Kort)
	13:00	UNRCP	Break	
	14:00	UNRCP	Internal briefings: UNDP and UNISDR DRR IN Palestine	Husham / Rima/Luna
	15:30	UNRCP	Mission planning: capacity and tasks working groups agenda , preparation questions	
24/03/2014 Monday	10:00 -12:30	President's Office	Working session on gaps and opportunities: introductory meeting with DRR WG, Local DRR actors (HCCD, technical, MoPD, PRCS	HC to invite UN group and INGOs request each actor to present their capacities and preparation) Local DRR actors (PCD to invite them)
	13:00	PCD	Bilateral meeting with PCD	TBC-Abdelqader and Iyad Following up
	15:00	PRCS	Bilateral meeting with PRCS	TBC-Abdelqader and Iyad Following up
	16:00	UNRCP	INTERNAL WORK	
25/03/2014 Tuesday	08:30	To NABLUS	Driving to Nablus	Team composed of: Alois (TL), Albrecht, Abdelqader, Nihan, Mamoun, Iyad, Nisreen, Majed, Husham, Rima; (Terje, Maria, Luna Nigel in GAZA till 27th)
	10:00 -14:00	An-Najah University/ Nablus	Meeting Dr Jalal Dabbiek Earthquake centre in the University Brief introduction of the university involvement in DRR IN Palestine Academic role and achievements Tour in the earthquake centre and the university premises Vulnerability analysis for certain areas in Nablus city Field visits for vulnerable areas	Alois (TL), Albrecht, Abdelqader, Nihan, Mamoun Iyad, Nisreen, Majed, Husham; Rima
	14:30 -16:00	Balata RC	To meet RC manager/ officer Local committees re emergency preparedness and capacities	UNRWA to facilitate-Maria Jose follow up with Dave Hutton
	18:00	UNRCP	Internal work and debriefings	

26/03/2014 Wednesday	09:00 - 10:00	Jericho field visit	Governor's office	Alois (TL), Albrecht, Abdelqader, Nihan, Iyad, Nisreen, Majed, Husham; OCHA FU; Mamoun
	11:00- 13:30		Pal Boarder authority, field visit with facilities	Access Unit to check who is responsible for crossing from the Palestinian side. TBC Cancelled
	11:00- 13:30	CD in Jericho	CD in Jericho and Training centre of Jericho/CD	instead
	14:00 – 16:00	Aqbat J Aber RC	To meet RC manager/ officer Local committees/ women committee re emergency preparedness and capacities	UNRWA to follow and suggest- Maria Jose follow up with Dave Hutton UNDAC team
	18:00	UNRCP	Internal work and debriefings	
27/03/2014 Thursday	0830 -10:00	Nablus governor office	Courtesy meeting with Nablus governor	Alois (TL), Albrecht, Abdelqader, Nihan, Iyad, Nisreen, Majed, Husham; Mamoun
	11:00 – 13:00	Nablus	Focus group for NWB discussion Local NWB coordination focus group re emergency preparedness PCD , PRCS, governor OFFICE (emergency focal point) , local council (including affected communities) , MoH, MoLG, MoPW	PCD / OCHA to follow Waiting PCD confirmation
	13:00 -14:30	Nablus	Bilateral meeting in Nablus if possible or needed	OCHA / PCD follow up
	16:30	UNRCP –Ramallah	Internal work and debriefing	Gaza Team back
28/03/2014 Friday	09:00 -11:00	Shufat RC Meeting at UNRWA at 9;00	To meet RC manager/ officer Local committees/ women committee re emergency preparedness and capacities	UNRWA
	11:30 -12:30	UNRWA West Bank management - Jerusalem	Discussion on UNRWA's DRR approach and debrief of the mission on the findings of the field visit	UNRWA
	14:30 -15:30	OCHA-Jerusalem	Working session with DRR rep / INGOs	HC invites
	15:30-16.30	OCHA Jerusalem	AIDA WG on DRR joins the meeting	HC invites
	16:30-18;00	OCHA Jerusalem	Informal drink for all DRR partners	UNDAC mission invites
29/03/2014 Saturday			Internal working and half day off	
30/03/2014 Sunday	0830 -10:30	Hebron Governor office	Courtesy meeting with Hebron governor	Alois (TL), Albrecht, Luna, Nihan, Iyad, Nisreen, Mamoun;
	10:00-12.30	PRCS	Discussion on Emergency Response	Abdelqader, Terje,
	11:00 - 13:00	Hebron	Focus group for SWB discussion Local SWB coordination focus group re emergency preparedness PCD , PRCS, governor OFFICE (emergency focal point) , local council (including affected communities) , MoH, MoLG, MoPW	Alois (TL), Albrecht, Luna, Nihan, Iyad, Nisreen, Mamoun;
	13:00 -14:00	Hebron	Bilateral meeting in Hebron local actors if possible or needed	OCHA / PCD follow up
	16:30	UNRCP	Internal work and debriefing	

31/03/2014 Monday	8:00- 09:00	Ramallah	08:00-09:00 Meeting with PCBS Ola Awad and other staff from PCBS at PCBS office (confirmed by Ayman Muhaisen, Assistant of Ola)	Maria, Majed, Nigel, Luna
	10:00-11.30	Ramallah	Meeting with MOPAD (confirmed by Dana)	
	13:00-14:00	Ramallah	Meeting with the Ministry of Health, Department of Emergency Health (Confirmed by Yousef WHO)	Terje, Abdelqader, Rima, Luna
	14.40-15:40	Ramallah	Meeting with the Ministry of Agriculture confirmed by Nadia from FAO)	Terje, Abdelqader, Hanne, Nihan
	15:00-16:00	DFID Jerusalem	Meeting with DFID, the State of Palestine risk analysis (Tessa Mackenzie)	Mamoun, Luna, Iyad
	16:30-17:30	ACU Jerusalem	Meeting	Alois, Albrecht, Nigel
				Alois, Albrecht, Nigel
01/04/2014 Tuesday	09:00 -10:00	Jerusalem	Meeting with DFID	Majed, Maria, Nigel
	10:00-13:00	Ramallah CD	Focus group for CWB discussion Local CWB coordination focus group re emergency preparedness PCD , PRCS, governor OFFICE (emergency focal point) , local council (including affected communities) , MoH, MoLG, MoPW	Alois (TL), Albrecht, Luna, Nihan, Iyad, Nisreen, Mamoun; AB, AQA, Maria
		Ramallah PCD	Meeting with PCD	AQA, TS, NW, Luna
	14:00-15:00	UNRCP Ramallah	Meeting with WFP at the UNRCP building Ramallah	
	15:00-16:00	Jerusalem, Mamila	Meeting with USAID	
	16:00-17:00	President's Office	Meeting with	AB, Maria
				TS, Maria, Rima, Luna, AB
02/04/2014 Wednesday	08.30-09.30	Ramallah	Meeting with the Ministry of Local Government with Mr. Walid Halayqa (confirmed by his assistant Du'aa mobile # 0569569723)	Luna, Rima, NW, IS
	11:00	Tel Aviv	Meeting with COGAT	Terje, Albrecht, Alois
	11:00	Team Office	Recommendation meeting REST OF TEAM	
	12:00-21:00	Team Office	Work	
03/04/2014 Thursday			Debriefing meeting with Pal authorities and UN DRR	
			Debriefing with key donors	
			Debriefing with HC/RC HC/ OCHA / mission leader and Minister of interior minster	
04/04/2014 Friday	11:00-12:00	OCHA, Jerusalem	UNDAC debriefing with interested donors (invitation is not sent yet)	
	15:00-16:00	OCHA, Jerusalem	Donor briefing on OCHA 2013 Annual Report. (HC and RR) . tbc	
05/ 04/2014			Departure	

Annex C: Briefing note on the Gaza Strip

UNDAC mission to the Gaza Strip 25-27 March 2014

Briefing Note

Context:

By the year 2020, the population of Gaza will increase to 2.13 million from an estimated 1.6 to 1.8 million today, with a population density to reach 5,835 people/km2 by 2020.[11] The growing population, deteriorating economic conditions with increasing poverty, unemployment, food insecurity, energy crisis, and extreme water supply and quality deficiencies, add to the already stressed resources, capacities and infrastructure. Moreover, the blockade and the long standing restrictions imposed on the Gaza Strip have elevated the likelihood and potential consequences of a disaster emergency.

Livelihoods are impacted by the long-term imposition of restrictions on access to agricultural lands near the fence with Israel and to fishing areas off the Gaza coastline. Since July 2013, the closure of the illegal tunnels by Egypt following its internal political situation and the severe limitations of the legal travel of people through Rafah had further strained the meagre economy and further eroded the copying mechanism of the population in Gaza. At the time of the UNDAC mission the economic indicators in Gaza presented a sharp decline. According to the latest PCBS data, the unemployment rate surged to a record high 38.5 per cent in the second quarter of 2013 (including 55.9 per cent among youth and an astounding 88 per cent among young female refugees).

The Humanitarian Team in Gaza (United Nations agencies, international NGOs, Palestinian NGO network) reports that a state of an ongoing emergency response is slowly developing in the Gaza Strip. The contingency plan of the Humanitarian Team is under review for the State of Palestine, including a review of the indicators. It would benefit from a risk analysis approach rather than a threshold approach. Humanitarian actors consider it important to scale up advocacy efforts and actions to promote an end to this deteriorating crisis amplified by the heightened access restrictions. The access conditions in Gaza lead to imminent disasters and unavoidable catastrophic conditions in cases of emergencies. The Humanitarian Country Team discussed the activation of the Contingency plan as the deterioration of the situation could lead to unrest and fuel violence, further compounding the risks for instability.

There is recognition of the effectiveness of the informal response system supported by strong social fabric and resilience of local communities in Gaza. Interestingly the system in Gaza reflects the national system in place in the West Bank, and use the same regulatory framework (Civil Defence Law No. 3). However, it is suggested by some organisations that international humanitarian action may have created aid dependency; at the same time it is important to recognise that local coping capacities are stretched and the economic sector is almost strained. In this sense, it is observed that civil society and the private sector will have a critical role to play in bridging gaps in response, rehabilitation and recovery in the Gaza Strip where access and mobility are restricted and resources are extremely limited.

Almost 75% of the Gaza Strip populations are refugees, of who most are living in camps managed by UNRWA. Municipal authorities support the refugee camps with energy and water supply services, and Civil Defence and the Palestinian Red Crescent Society support in emergency response when needed. However, a range of other services and measures related to disaster mitigation and

preparedness fall under UNRWA's responsibility at least for the safety of critical infrastructure. The current difficulties that UNRWA is experiencing to mobilise adequate resources for its programme, may affect the agency's ability to embark in disaster mitigation programmes. The camps' Popular Committees play a key role alongside UNRWA in strengthening resilience, building capacities of the local community and improving awareness of disaster risks.

The separation between Gaza Strip and West Bank coupled with the long terms access adds to the complexity of risks and vulnerabilities in the area and challenges the effectiveness of any contingency and response planning as well as of international coordination and support mechanisms. It is important in this context also to recognise the need for a structured dialogue with Israeli Government on access and mobility for preparedness, planning, management, and response to disasters caused by natural hazards.

It is strongly recommended that a minimum preparedness approach (focusing on key life-saving sectors) is developed and implemented in a coordinated manner between humanitarian and government actors both in the Gaza Strip and West Bank. There is a need to work with Israel and other political actors on this approach.

Gaps and challenges in the context of disaster risk management:

- Due to the operationalization of the no contact policies (particularly in the case of key donor's counter terrorism legislation) coordination and information sharing with the de facto authorities in Gaza is certainly challenging and may affect a coherent approach to preparedness and mitigation measures. This may lead to duplications and inefficiencies associated to the lack of coordination across various stakeholders groups (Humanitarian Country Team, Authorities, Municipalities, Civil Society, Private Sector) in utilizing limited resources and the flow of necessary information. For example, a disaster management information system exists at the Civil Defence, however lacks proper linkages with data from various sectors that is usually maintained by the line ministries.
- Looking into critical lifesaving sectors such as health and water/sanitation the ability to prepare and recover from shocks and crisis is severely affected due to a series of factors:
    - The serious limitations on accessibility to import, upgrade, and maintain machinery, equipment, material and supplies necessary for reconstruction, infrastructure, and disaster response.
    - Energy crisis (with an average power cut of 18 hours daily during the last 6 months in addition to fuel shortage with no constant regular supply) contributes to the disastrous impacts of any emergency scenario as well as hinders current actions on risk management.
    - Developing technical capacities of relevant officials in key lifesaving capacities is hindered by limitations by certain donors to support capacity building as well as for the inability for public civil servants (as well as rest of Gaza residents) to leave Gaza.
- Urban search and rescue capacities exist with experience drawn from response to recent Israeli attacks on Gaza in 2008/2009 and in 2012, however the resources are very limited levels due to access restrictions on material and equipment.
- Funding for emergencies is a core challenge and more so in the current situation of

economic crisis and lack of resources for the DFA in Gaza. Despite the fact that a central emergency fund exists as well as municipal budgets that could be allocated for disaster management and response, these resources are very limited and stressed with critical economic conditions.

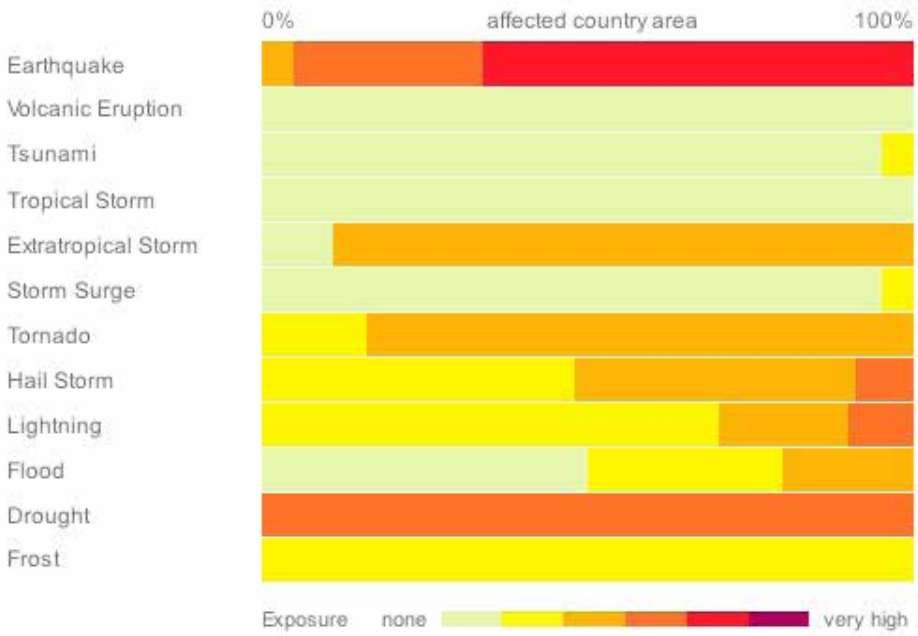
- In the context of hostilities safety of national and international staff and volunteers (Civil Defence, medical services, ambulances, etc.) would be at risk during humanitarian response. In an emergency context related to an escalation, operations in Gaza could be affected due to evacuation of key staff (particularly NGOs) , hence focus should be on creating conditions for safety and security. It is necessary to undertake collective risk assessment to allow for return as soon as possible once security situation stabilises. International UN staff remained in Gaza during the last emergencies, along with a substantial number of national staff, which allowed for running UN operations without disruption.
- Lack of public awareness of safety procedures during emergency response adds to the pressures on service providers and actors in disaster management and response. As an example, fragmented preparedness and awareness-raising actions in schools with no comprehensive integrated approach in the school curriculum nor training curricula of teachers. However, some drills organised and awareness material developed targeting schools in the buffer high security zone on the eastern borders of Gaza Strip.
- Sectorial plans exist (in some cases contingency planning is quite developed such as MoH) but there was no evidence of an integrated plan for disaster risk management nor climate risk management in Gaza.
- Education sector lacks resources to ensure safety and resilience of schools and educational facilities. However, seismic code is obligatory for all new schools being built. Growing population, destruction and damage to more school facilities in military attacks on Gaza, coupled with limitation of resources to establish new facilities stresses further the infrastructure and the human resources in the education sector.

Annex D: Natural hazards in the State of Palestine

Palestinian Territory

Munich RE

Natural hazards

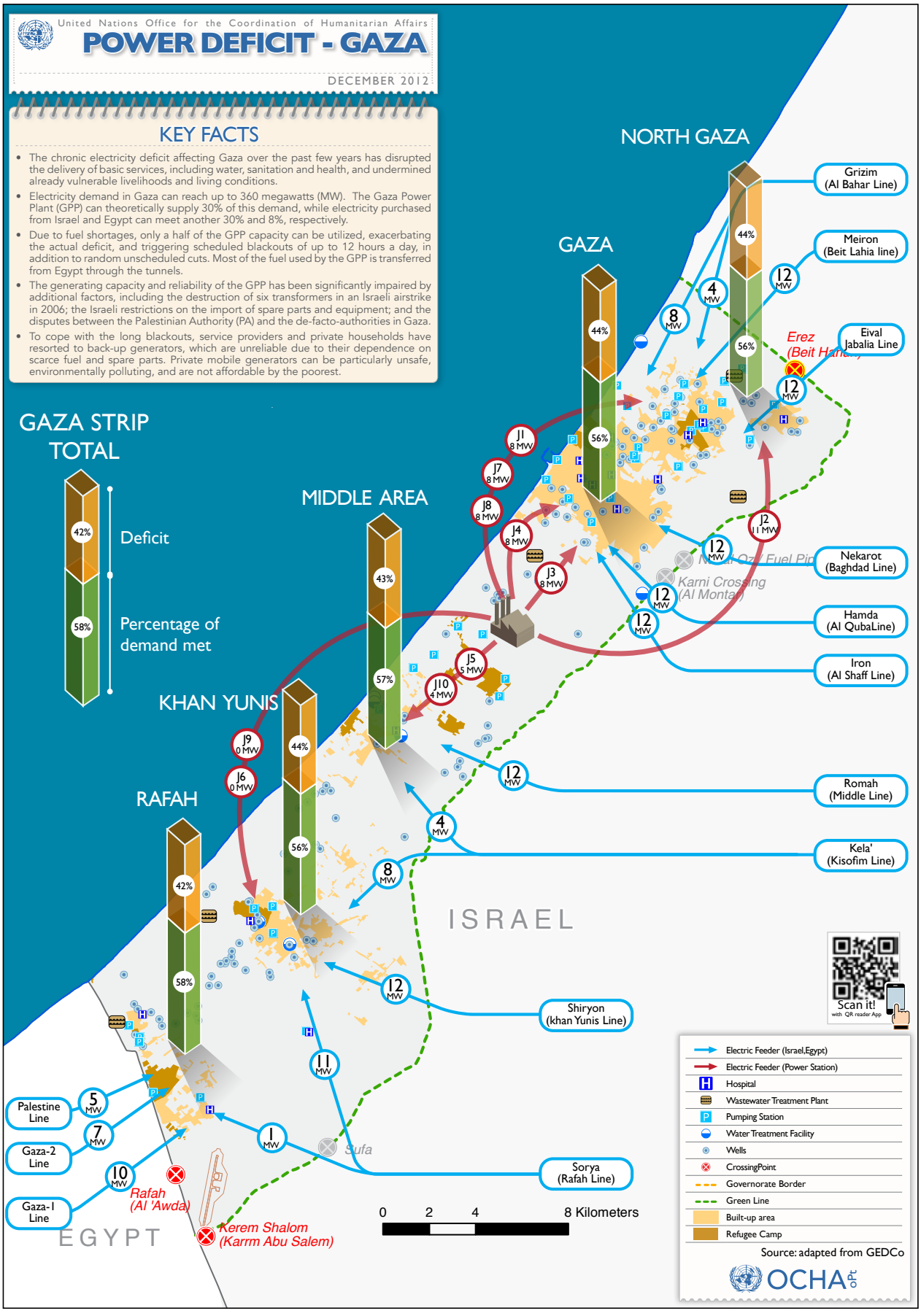


Exposure
The bar charts show the degree of exposure to natural hazards and the percentage of area affected (per country).

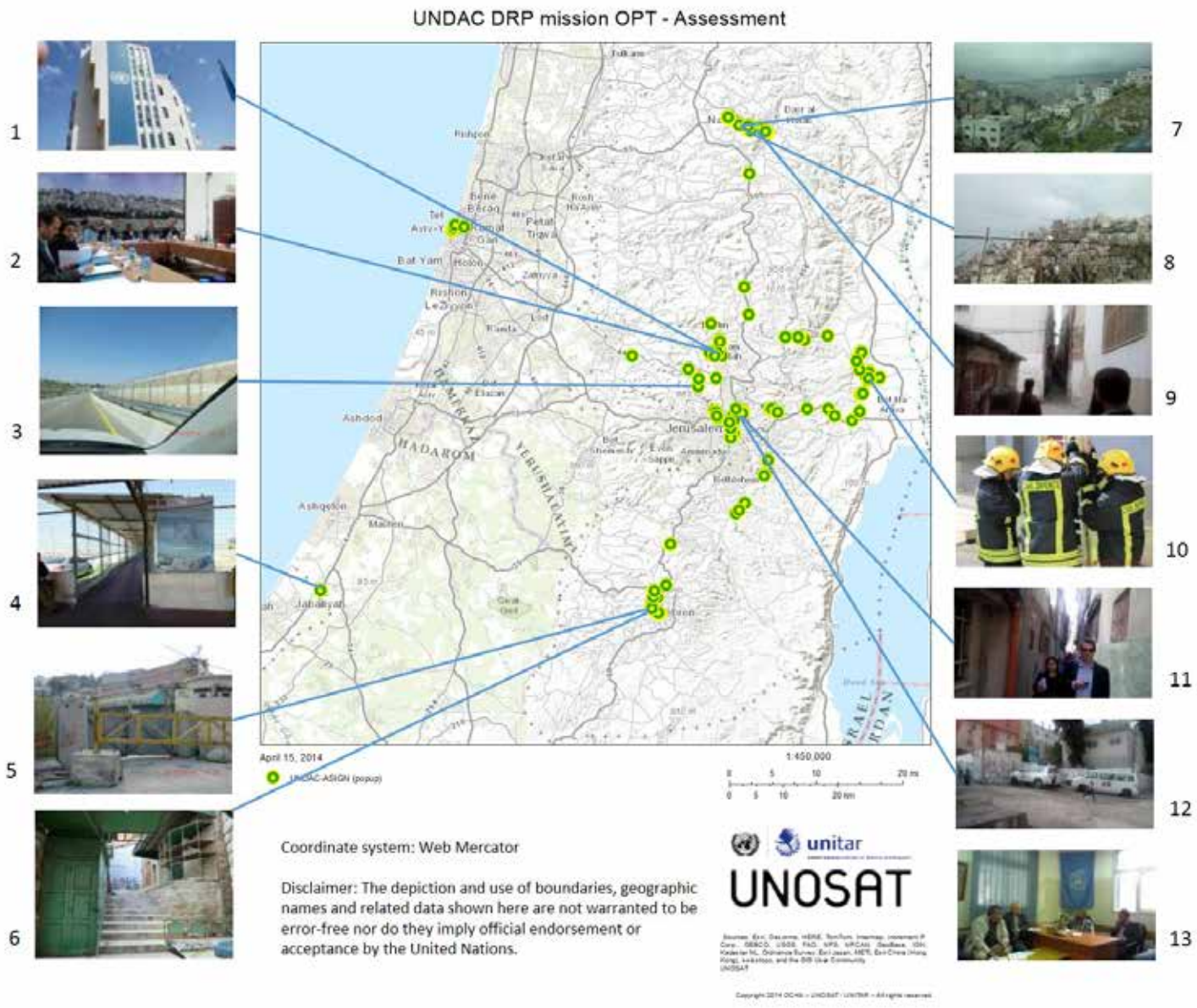
Notes
Tsunami and storm surges are a threat to coastal regions, particularly gulfs, bays, and estuaries.
The flood hazard results from river floods and torrential rain.
The hazard of dryness and drought is caused by major deviations from the normal amounts of precipitation.
The frost hazard depends on the elevation and the latitude.

Source: Munich Re

Annex E: Power deficit in the Gaza Strip



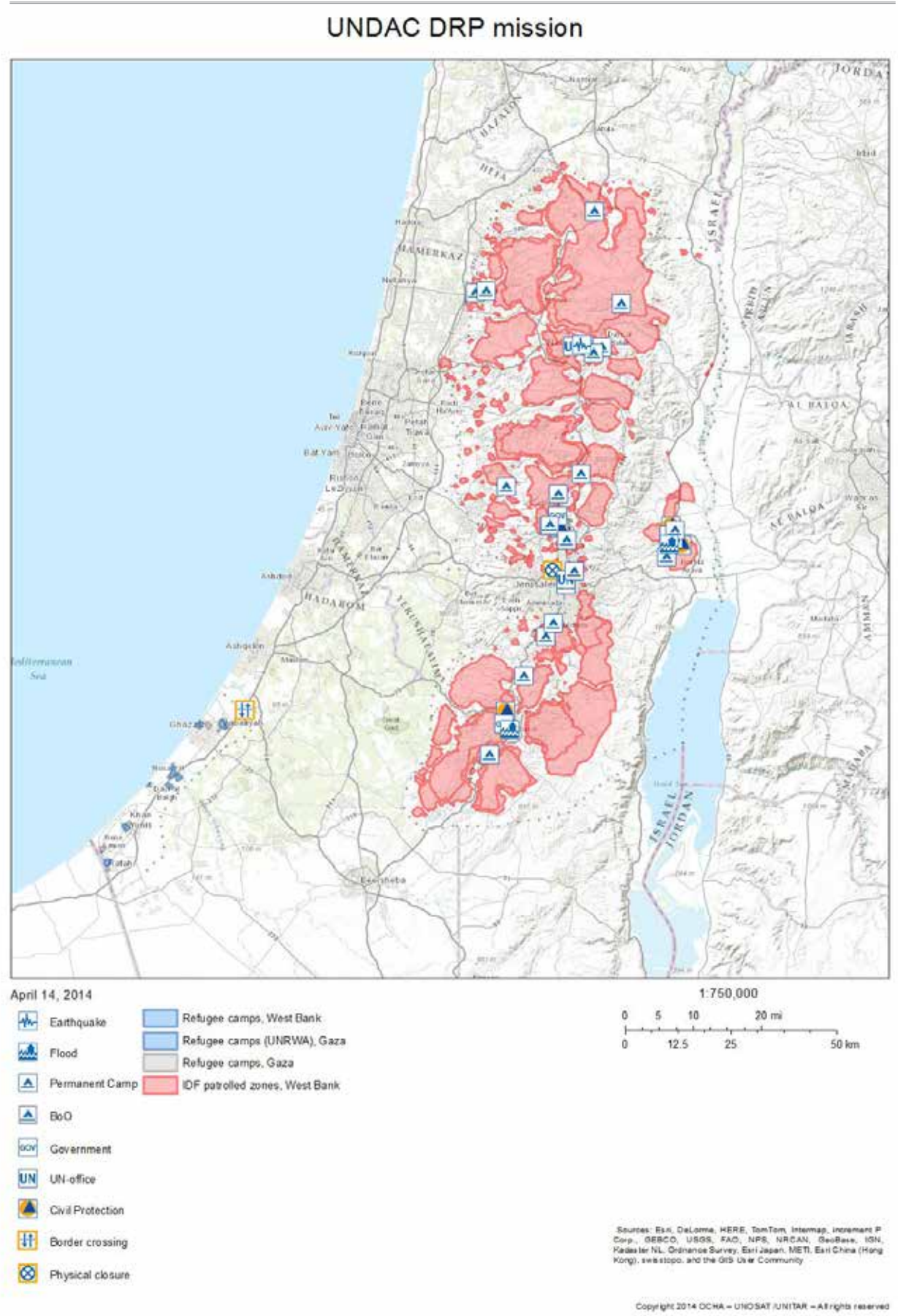
Annex F: Mission assessments



Annex G: Mission plan

Date	Activity				Notes
Saturday 22 March	Arrival of UNDAC team to Ramallah				
Sunday 23 March	Internal Workshop, UNDSS Briefing, Meeting with UNDP, Meeting with President's Office				
Monday, 24 March	OCHA and ISDR briefings, DRR WG Meeting with PRCS (confirmed at 1000), MoPAD, PCD, UN Women				
Tuesday 25 March	**Gaza Strip** Transport to Gaza Working Session: UNDAC Groups in OCHA field offices + UN DRR Agency field reps	**Ramallah** Working Session: UNDAC Groups in OCHA field offices + UN DRR Agency field rep's	**BoO** Provision of support and coordination for the team, Nablus An-Najah University	**Senior Team** Senior Team meeting with Palestinian Authorities	Organised by UNDP
Wednesday 26 March	UNDAC group meetings	UNDAC group meetings		Senior Team meetings	
Thursday 27 March	UNDAC group meetings Travel back from Gaza	UNDAC group meetings		Senior Team meetings	
Friday 28 March	**Ramallah** Working Session with UN DRR rep. Internal work		TBD	Senior Team meetings in Ramallah	In the evening, a drink with all stakeholders could be organised
Saturday 29 March	Internal working				Half-day off for the team
Sunday 30 March	UNRWA camps		TBD	Senior Team meetings in Ramallah	Re-planning of the second week
Monday 31 March	Thematic work Donors, NGOs		Thematic work Public awareness		
Tuesday 1 April	Thematic work IM, Gender, DRR		Thematic work Contingency Planning		
Wednesday 2 April	Thematic work finalisation		Report writing		
Thursday 3 April	Report writing and editing Debrief with Palestinian Authorities and UN DRR WG				
Friday 4 April	After-briefing with HC/RC				
Saturday 5 April	Departure				

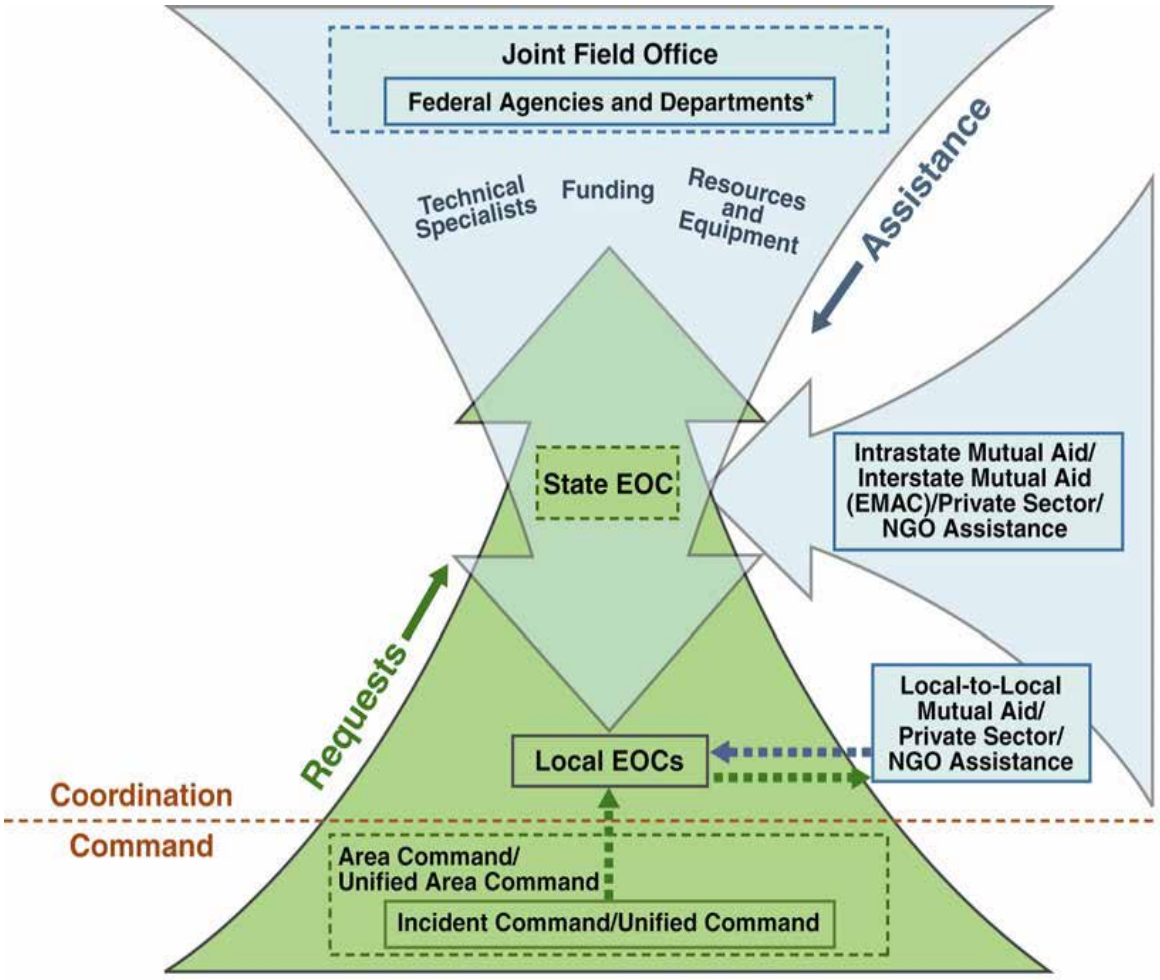
Annex H: Mission overview



Annex I: List of actors and meetings

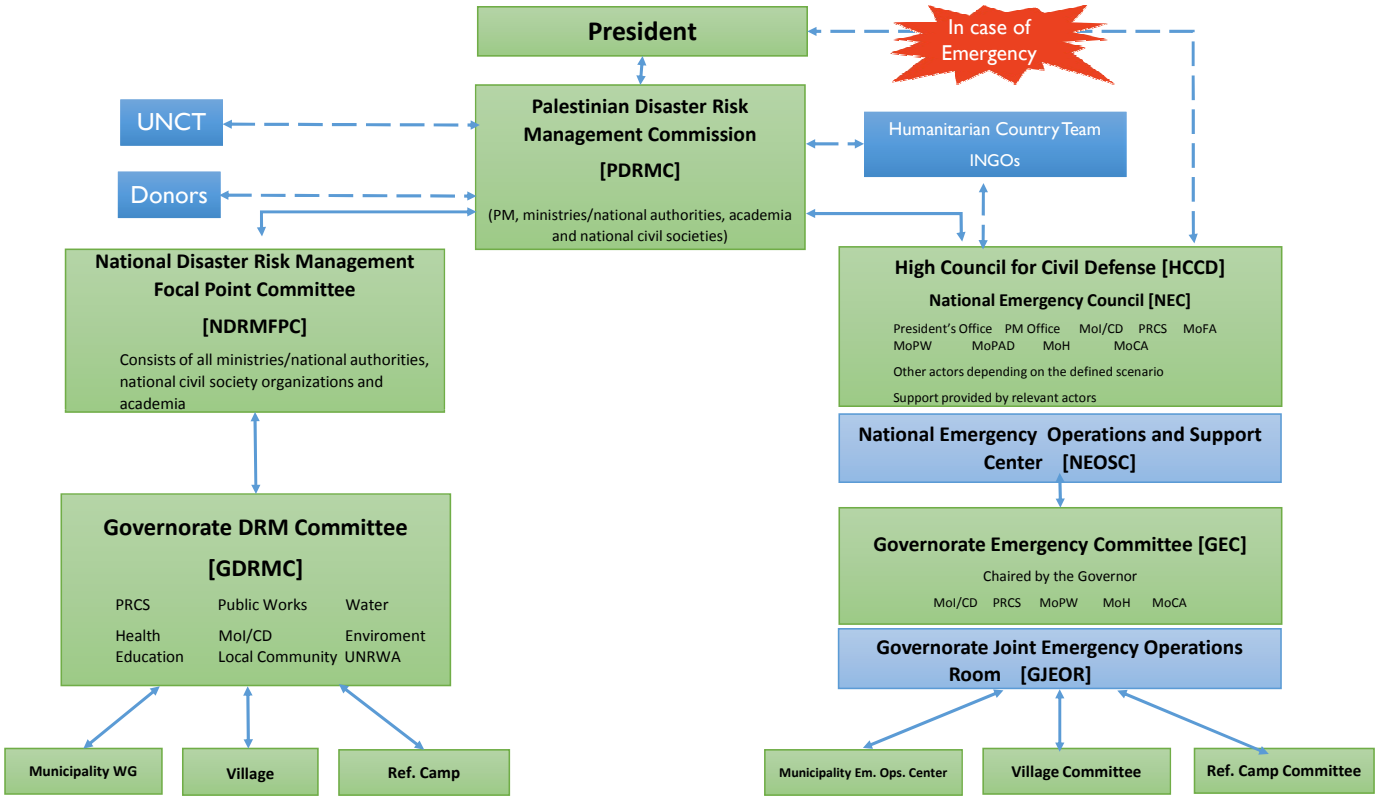
Senior level meetings	Incl. field reps	Field level meetings	Incl. field reps
		Palestinian	
President´s office National Technical Team	UNDP	Governorates offices – political authorities Emergency coordination committees Key staff in preparedness and response Key governorate committees	UNDP
		Municipalities, villages political authorities Emergency coordination committees Key staff in preparedness and response Key community committees Civil organisations	
Prime minister office PM crises management unit	UNDP		UNDP
Ministry of Health	WHO	Hospitals/clinics etc.	WHO
Min of Public works & Housing	UNICEF, UNDP	Public works & Housing Field unit	UNICEF, UNDP
Ministry of Social Welfare	UNRWA	Sub-national reps	UNRWA
Ministry of Interior			
Min of Admin. Planning & Development		Sub-national reps	
Ministry of Defence		Sub-national reps	
Ministry of Finance		Sub-national reps	
Ministry of Education	UNICEF	Universities Al-Najah seismic monitoring in Jericho Schools	UNICEF
Ministry of Agriculture	WFP, FAO	Sub-national reps	WFP, FAO
Ministry of Environment	UNDP	Meteorological dept., monitoring	UNDP
PCD HQ: PCD Director General Emergency Operations Centre Disaster Management Department Planning Department Support Unit International Department Other	UNDP WFP	Directorate in governate incl. Coord. Centre Fire stations Support units in Nablu, Ramallah, Hebron Nablus fire department (Not part of PCD) Hebron fire department (Not part of PCD)	UNDP WFP
Police HQ		Police sub-national reps	
National NGO - PINGO		Field level NGO	
PRCS - Ramallah	WHO, UNDP	Ambulances and other field level PRCS	WHO, UNDP
Energy	UNDP	Sub-national reps	UNDP
Water/Sanitation	UNICEF	Sub-national reps	UNICEF
Transport		Sub-national reps	
Telecommunication		Sub-national reps	
President´s office /National Tech Team	UNDP	Governorates offices – political authorities Emergency coordination committees	UNDP
		International	
International NGO		Field reps	
Key donor representatives			
UN RC/HC	None		None
UNDP Res/Rep Key department heads	None	UNDP field staff members	None
WHO Key department heads	None	WHO field staff members	None
WFP HQ WFP PCD support rep Key department heads	None	WFP field staff members	None
UNICEF Key department heads	None	UNICEF field staff members	None
UNRWA HQ UNRWA West Bank UNRWA Gaza Strip Key department heads	None	Camp Councils	None
IFRC/ICRC		ICRC field office in Gaza	
GOI	Albrecht to plan	Association of Municipalities (Palestine/ IL)	
		Galandia Airport Representatives	

Annex J: Flow of requests and assistance during large-scale incidents

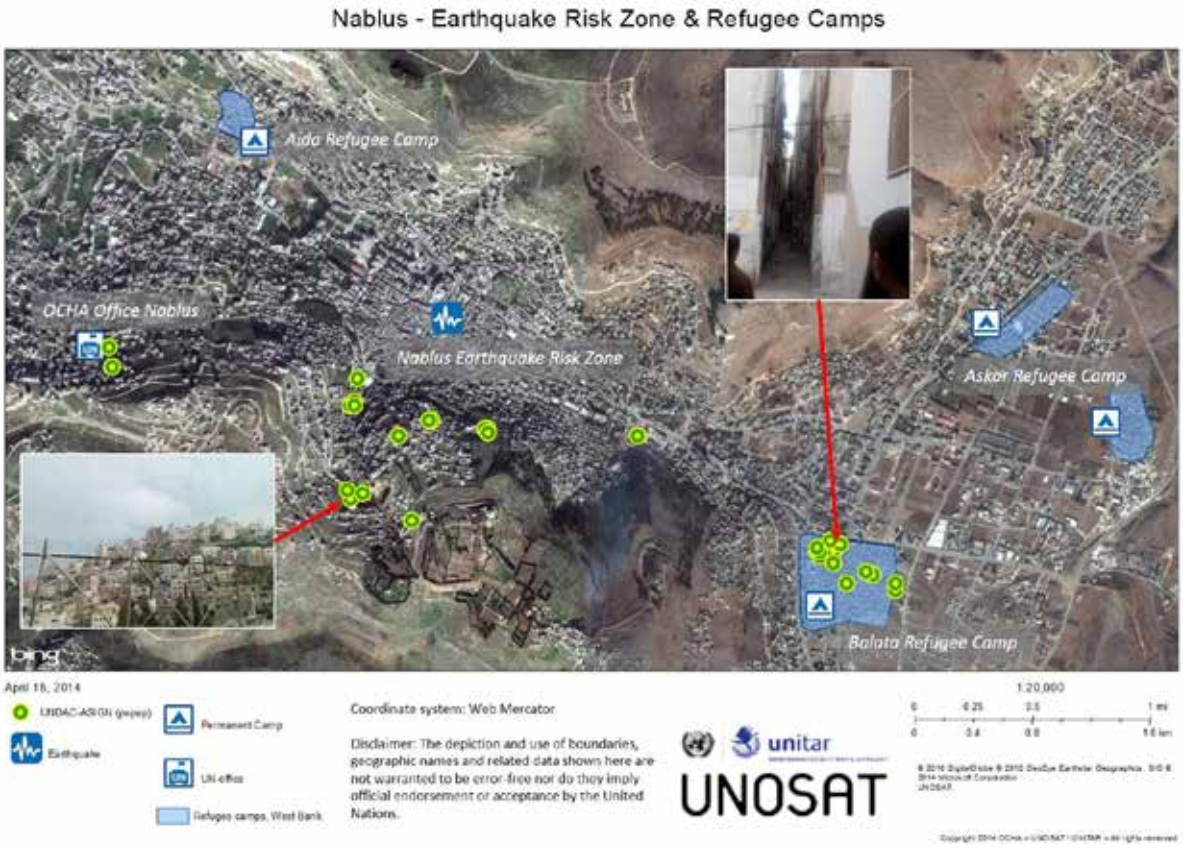


*Some Federal agencies (U.S. Coast Guard, Environmental Protection Agency, etc.) have statutory responsibility for response and may coordinate and/or integrate directly with affected jurisdictions.

Annex K: Organisational structure of national disaster management responders



Annex L: Nablus Earthquake Risk Zone and Refugee Camp



Endnotes

1. Under the leadership of the RC/HC, the working group includes UNDP, FAO, OCHA, the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), the UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS), the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the World Health Organization (WHO), and World Food Programme (WFP)

2. Figure is the total estimated population for 2013, as published by Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics. West Bank estimates include East Jerusalem. "Estimated Population in the Palestinian Territory Mid-Year by Governorate, 1997-2016" – http://www.pcbs.gov.ps/Portals/_Rainbow/ Documents/gover_e.htm

3. PCBS 2013

4. PCBS 2013

5. As of 30 June 2013, UNRWA Registration Statistical Bulletin, Second Quarter 2013. For formatting reasons, "registered refugees" in this table also includes the categories "registered persons" and "married to non-refugee family members", which are usually tracked and reported separately by UNRWA. The number of people in these categories, which have been included in the overall "registered refugee" number in the table, was 157,470 in the West Bank and 63,923 in Gaza.

6. As of 30 June 2012, UNRWA Registration Statistical Bulletin, Second Quarter 2012

7. Source: HDI: UNDP; all others: PCBS. GDP data exclude occupied East Jerusalem due to unavailability of data. International Monetary Fund, Staff Report Prepared for the September 2013 Meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee.

8. The purpose of ISO 31000:2009 is to provide principles and generic guidelines on risk management. ISO 31000 seeks to provide a universally recognised paradigm for practitioners and companies employing risk management processes to replace the myriad of existing standards, methodologies and paradigms that differed between industries, subject matters and regions. Currently, the ISO 31000 family is expected to include: ISO 31000:2009: Principles and Guidelines on Implementation; ISO/IEC 31010:2009: Risk Management - Risk Assessment Techniques; ISO Guide 73:2009: Risk Management - Vocabulary.

9. For this, one could draw upon the Guidelines on the Use of Foreign Military and Civil Defence Assets in Disaster Relief ("The Oslo Guidelines"), the Guidelines on the Use of Military and Civil Defence Assets to Support United Nations Humanitarian Activities in Complex Emergencies ("The MCDA Guidelines), the EU Host Nation Support Guidelines, and the INSARAG Guidelines.

10. There are two calls from DG ECHO open at the time of writing: One for preparedness and prevention ("Call for Proposals 2014 for Prevention and Preparedness Projects in Civil Protection and Marine Pollution" – deadline 30 May 2014) and one for exercises ("EU Civil Protection Mechanism Call for Proposals" – deadline 25 June); see: http://ec.europa.eu/echo/funding/opportunities/proposals_en.htm Increased involvement in the Horizon 2020 research project would also be advisable. Horizon 2020 is the biggest EU Research and Innovation programme ever with nearly 80 billion of funding available over seven years.

11. United Nations report: Gaza in 2020 –A liveable place? – Published in August 2012

12. Source: US National Incident Management System

13. From Adapted 3rd new structure 4.4.14

United Nations
Disaster Assessment and Coordination team