

A Mini Workshop for the Committee of Implementing Seismic Building Code in Palestine

Date: 4/8/2013

Location: Engineers Association office–Ramallah

Time: Monday, 4 August 2013

Participants: 12 persons representing Ministry of Local Government (MLG), Ministry of Public Works and Housing (MPWH), the Urban Planning and Disaster Risk Reduction Center (UPDRRC) -An-Najah National University, and the Engineering Association, including Dr.Tawfiq Bodeiri Assistant Undersecretary of MLG and Mr.Fayeq Deek, Undersecretary of MPWH.

Workshop Themes

- Introduction and orientation about Earthquake Risk Mitigation project in Palestine (SASPARM. FP7 Project).
- Evaluation of the implementation of memorandum of understanding signed between the MLG, MPWH, the Engineers Association and the UPDRRC, An-Najah National University.
- Training courses on seismic design for buildings.
- Mechanisms required to follow up the seismic design during the preparations of the drawings and the implementation, (monitor the design and the implantation of the design during construction).
- International campaign for resilient cities and the degree of commitment towards achieving the 10 essential points for resilient cities.
- A proposed workshop to be conducted on the national level around the end of September 2013, with the participation of the European Centre for Training and Research in Earthquake Engineering (EUCENTRE) and the Institute for Advanced Study (IUSS) in Pavia, Italy.
- The concern of the international Agencies “The United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction” (UNISDR) about what has been accomplished.
- Upgrading existing buildings for seismic performance and international funding programs.
- Other items of relevance to participants and their institutions

Workshop proceedings:

Head of the Engineers Association opened the workshop by welcoming the participants. He expressed appreciation to everybody's efforts and emphasized on the importance and need to integrate the earthquake forces in the design of the buildings. He also referred to the importance of the resilient cities and the need to reach an advanced level towards the level reached internationally in the field of disaster risk reduction. He also emphasized the need for continuous cooperation between all concerned parties.

1- Dr. Jalal Dabbeek, director of UPDRRC, presented a briefing on SASPARM Project referring also to all partners and donor as well. He mentioned the project public and awareness campaigns which targeted engineers, decision makers as well as citizens in general. He also highlighted the establishment of the project Website through which all project activities are presented and documented. This covers the research studies and other activities. Knowing that, all info about the Website will be forwarded to all concerned.

2- Moreover, project achievements with the ministries especially the ministries that signed the memorandum of understanding were evaluated, as well as adopting the Jordanian Code of practices for seismic design of buildings and using the details of this code. With reference to the nature of the circumstances and the time limit that has prevented the full implementation of what has been agreed on. The training courses in the central part of West Bank were done; Preparations are ongoing to do the course for the southern and northern parts during the period Aug. – Oct. 2013.

It was also referred to the mechanisms required to review the design in planning and those required to monitor the implementation of the design during construction. In this regards, it was emphasized that the Engineers Association will not be capable to achieve that alone, as this requires more analysis and study in cooperation with the municipalities and in the coming months the operational mechanisms will be developed.

3- Engineer Idaily confirmed the importance of putting a time frame and to find the required mechanisms to monitor the implementation and this will be forwarded to the engineering offices committee to analyze study and submit a plan. Regarding the protocols of cooperation between the Engineering Association and the municipalities, he pointed out that most of the large municipalities have signed a protocol of cooperation with the Association.

4- Engineer Sami Taweel emphasized the need to have a timeframe for follow-up and the need for the legislation and the public awareness.

5- Regarding the resilient cities, Dr Dabbeek mentioned that there are 7 cities that signed the protocol of the resilient cities and on the commitment to adopt the ten essential points for making cities resilient according to the international campaign sponsored by the UNISDR. There is a plan to follow up these commitments with municipalities.

6- Regarding the September 2013 workshop: It is suggested to conduct it around the end of September. The date will be decided after coordination with the Europeans and other partners. The title of the workshop will be within SASPARM main themes. It will take place at An Najah University and will be linked to the international campaign on resilient cities within Hugo framework.

7- The concern and role of the international organizations, UNDP and UNISDR, was also highlighted and they will be invited to share in the September workshop.

8- Existing Buildings:

Reference was made to the international programs relevant to (Seismic Retrofitting of existing buildings).

- There is a need for Palestine to submit a proposal to be included in the World Bank's plan towards upgrading the existing buildings.

- What would be achieved in terms of capacity building of the specialized technical people and the integration of the seismic design requirements in the new buildings will be a major and strong reason which will support Palestinians towards approaching the World Bank to include Palestine in this program. Dr. Dabbeek underlined the fact that the commitment of the seismic design of new buildings is the first step and accomplishing this step is necessary for the international institutions to support the future programs in the field of rehabilitation of existing buildings to resist earthquakes.

9- Other items:

The link between the safe design and the green design was highlighted. It was emphasized that a safe building is a friendly environment one. There is a possibility to organize an activity about both aspects in the near future.