

# **Final Conference Recommendations**

## **SASPARM Project**

### **“Seismic Risks Mitigation in Palestine”**

#### **1. Introduction**

SASPARM’s two-day conference on Seismic Risks Mitigation was an opportunity for all interested international, national and local parties to meet, debate and discuss issues of concern. As a concluding mile stone of SASPARM project’s activities, the conference constituted a forum for deep discussions on the conference scheduled issues ([see conference agenda and sessions](#)).

<http://www.sasparm.ps/en/?page=details&newsID=189&cat=3>

#### **2. Conference Recommendations**

The recommendations in this conference have come as continuation of the suggestions and recommendations provided by participants in all SASPARM activities and events conducted during the project framework, including workshops and miscellaneous training meetings. The following recommendations and suggestions were made by the conference participants during and in conclusion of debates and discussions following each session, as well as from forms filled out by individual participants from different relevant fields (see list of participants).

The participants called for the development of appropriate operational mechanisms to implement these recommendations taking into account the reality on the ground in the Palestinian Territories; the level of preparedness of Palestinian organisations to fulfil these goals; the networking and cooperation required from the relevant administrative and professional sectors; and the needed budgets necessary for the implementation of these recommendations. The recommendations are as follows:

##### **2.1 Appropriate national policies and institutional structures:**

- Mandatory engineering supervision during construction and prevention of indiscriminate construction.
- Identifying the roles and responsibilities of each department in disaster risk management in the relevant local and global institutions.
- Allocating budgets for disaster risk reduction at the national and local levels, including those of the state institutions and municipalities.
- Activating and developing the role of high Council of Civil Defence through expanding its membership to include all sectors of national institutions; amending existing law of the council as necessary; and adopting a permanent secretariat and developing mandatory operational regulations in different areas of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR).
- Prioritizing preparedness to confront disasters on a national level.
- Defining terms of references, roles and comprehensive planning through the formation of a central/ national body where disaster risk reduction governmental and non-governmental institutions can be involved. This should be under the Hugo Framework for Action (HFA 2005-2015 and 2015-2025), to build the resilience of nations and communities to disasters.
- Launching a department or unit within local municipalities or governorates to reduce disaster risk.

- Establishing a Palestinian strategy to retrofit the existing buildings in accordance with a full-scale national plan. This will serve as the first stage in a long-term plan to equip sensitive and important governmental buildings.

## **2.2 Legislations, systems and executive regulations:**

- Developing mechanisms to continuously monitor buildings' construction with reference to design and its details documents, by conducting visits to construction areas and ensuring follow-up by expert engineers with the relevant authorities.
- Emphasising the importance of obtaining occupancy permits, and linking this with the fulfilment of conditions and requirements of resilient building codes.
- Stressing the need to issue a Palestinian Seismic building code while continue the efforts, until then, to ensure the adherence to the decisions of the Engineers' Association and the high Planning Council regarding the adoption of the Jordanian code for a transitional period until the completion of the Palestinian code.
- Work on creating the necessary legislations to help institutions carry out the required tasks.
- Applying a resilient building design system for facilities and infrastructure through the enactment of binding regulations for the designers, executors (contractors) and owners. This can be achieved through the incorporating of relevant laws and providing them in the construction and management systems in the local bodies and municipalities.

## **2.3 Technical training and public awareness:**

- Organising workshops and training courses to address issues in existing buildings and conduct assessments of buildings' seismic vulnerability, as well as seismic retrofitting to increase their ability to withstand earthquakes.
- Raising awareness and building capacities of engineers through training courses for architects and structural engineers.
- Continuing to conduct public awareness campaigns addressed to all community sectors to lessen risks.
- The need to focus on community participation in risk reduction activities, and to establish voluntary committees for disaster risk reduction in various fields.
- Encouraging Media participation in various disaster risk reduction programmes.
- Performing practical trainings (seismic simulations) on evacuation, rescue, first aid, sheltering, and all other operations contained in the disaster response, in accordance with the functions assigned to relevant institutions. Furthermore, it is necessary to take into account coordination and joint action between these institutions.
- Taking advantage of knowledge, innovations and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels.

## **2.4 Building capacities for preparedness and emergency response:**

- Increasing the capacity of municipal employees to manage disaster risks, both within municipal engineering departments and sections of field service.
- Developing the capabilities of Civil Defence Department and other institutions working in the field of emergency response operations, and giving priority to providing budgets and financial allocations at the local and national level.

- Establishing centralised operations centres, according to scientific standards on the national, governorate and city levels, and linking these centres with clear, specific mechanisms of cooperation.

### **2.5 Local and international networking:**

- Encouraging municipalities to join the global campaign “Making Cities Resilient), and work towards applying the ten essential for making cities disaster resilient.
- Adopting the Arabic Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction (2011-2020) and the Hyogo Action Framework to increase the capacity of Palestinian society and institutions for disaster risk reduction.
- Exchanging information and cooperating with universities and scientific centres at national and international levels, and enhancing the role of integrating disaster risk reduction into university and school curricula. Furthermore, fostering public awareness, media, training and education on this subject.

*For more details about the conference see the following link:*

<http://www.sasparm.ps/en/?page=details&newsID=189&cat=3>