

# Mid-Term Evaluation Report

**School components within the “Assistance for community-based institutional structures for conflict-sensitive disaster-preparedness and enhanced resilience in selected countries of the MENA region” programme**



*Photo taken by evaluator in Almaseken al Shabiah School, Tyre, Lebanon*

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## **Abbreviations**

BMZ	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
BTS	Blood Transfusion Services
CB	Community Based
CBDRR	Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction
CERT	Community Emergency Response Teams
CP	Contingency Planning
CW	Community Works
DM	Disaster Management
DP	Disaster Preparedness
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
ERC	Egyptian Red Crescent
EMS	Emergency Medical Services
FA	First Aid
FR	First Responder
GRC	German Red Cross
HNS	Host National Society
HVCA	Hazard, Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment
KII	Key Informant Interview
LRC	Lebanese Red Cross
MEHE	Ministry of Education and Higher Education
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoEHE	Ministry of Education and Higher Education
MRC	Moroccan Red Crescent
OPT	Occupied Palestinian Territory
PA	Palestinian National Authority
PFA	Psychological First Aid
PRCS	Palestine Red Crescent Society
PSP/PSS	Psychosocial Support
SB	School Based
SBA	School Based Approach
SSH	Sozialstrukturhilfe - Societal and Sociostructural Policy Measures
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNISDR	United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
VCA	Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

## Executive Summary

### Short project description

Since 2012 German Red Cross is implementing funds from the BMZ Societal and Sociostructural Policy Measures fund (Sozialstrukturhilfe – SSH) in one regional programme in Lebanon, Palestine, Morocco and Egypt (since 2014), with the focus of strengthening community-based institutional structures regarding disaster preparedness and disaster risk reduction.

The **overall objective of SSH grants** according to the BMZ is the **creation of long-term structures**.

**Therefore, the BMZ requests the implementing organizations to apply a multilevel approach:** Structure-forming measures are to be planned on three levels (micro, meso and macro) and interlinked from the very beginning in the implementation of the project. According to the BMZ model, only the combination of the three levels leads to long-term development policy effects in the respective funding priorities (in case of GRC, the relevant funding priority is “Support of National Aid Societies”).

For the second phase of the programme, which started in 2016, GRC and the programme partners identified conflict-sensitive disaster preparedness as a common denominator and the overall objective of the program to strengthen community resilience towards current and future risks (including natural as well as conflict related risks) in these four selected countries.

Subject of the mid-term evaluation at hand was the second common theme of this second programme phase: The **collective work on regional approaches for school based DP, DRR and resilience**. In acknowledgement of the unique contexts and different levels of experience in each of the four countries, GRC and the partners assumed that the **four contexts** share sufficient similarities to **permit the generation of benefits for each country approach related to school based activities (SBA) through regional exchange, learning and model building**.

### Key questions of the evaluation

The evaluation schedule provided for visits of 4-5 working days to each country. Therefore the mid-term evaluation at hand was not meant to evaluate each of the four different projects with a conventional encompassing project evaluation scope along all DAC criteria.

Instead the purpose of the evaluation was to **evaluate the progress of developing and implementing respective school based activities and approaches since the start of the second phase of the programme in 2016**. In Palestine, where the school-based activities started in late 2017 only, the evaluation focused on the feasibility and potential of the approach.

The key evaluation tool applied was a set of participative workshops in each country with a core group from within the HNS and GRC. Facilitated by the evaluator, this core group provided secondary data on the progress and outlook of the respective school-based approaches in each country.

The data was clustered along the upper mentioned BMZ model categories (Macro, Meso and Micro) and along the categories of baseline, current status, plans for 2018 and future plans to permit appraisal of progress and current planning.

Through the findings, the stakeholders should be better positioned to further shape the third phase (2019-2021) of the programme. In addition to the mapping, the evaluator extended and triangulated secondary data to the extent possible through document reviews and further key informant interviews.

The key questions of the evaluation, guiding the collection and analysis of data, were as follows:

**Effectiveness:**

- *To what extent is the school based approach developed?*
- *What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?*

**Relevance:**

- *Does the approach consider assessments of local/national contexts/hazard profiles or is it only theory driven?*
- *Is the approach harmonized with other state and non-state actors?*
- *What relevance does the school based intervention have within the overall programming of the HNS? How has this developed since the start of the program?*

**Sustainability & Connectedness:**

- *What will the role of the HNS be in the future? Will the HNS still provide the service? If so, who finances this work? Can the schools and/or the communities be the drivers in the future?*
- *Which measures are implemented to achieve sustainability?*

**Coherence:**

- *To what extent were policies of different concerned actors in the intervention complementary or contradictory?*
- *Are there any political consequences following the action that were not intended?*

**Impact:**

- *What has happened as a result of the programme or project and why?*
- *In how far had the intervention influence on the structure of the HNS?*
- *Has the design of the multi-country program and the exchange between the countries strengthened the intervention?*

## Key findings

**Effectiveness:**

In **Palestine**, the development and pilot phase for a PRCS school-based approach (SBA) started in late 2017 only, after an amendment and respective budgetary top up of the BMZ programme: PRCS with its Community Works (CW) department received a budget to plan and start community outreach activities on Micro level in the second half of 2017 and to pilot SBA in Palestine. Since then, PRCS is in the process of developing a SBA and started to implement a pilot in Salfeet, Westbank.

The host national societies in **Egypt**, **Lebanon** and **Morocco** all started their SBA before 2016. During the current programme phase since 2016 they all managed to advance the content development of their respective SBAs and to increase capacity to deliver it on broader scale. The evaluator concludes that the reported progress in each of the three countries shows positive changes on macro, meso and micro levels and therefore translates into progress towards the creation of long-term structures of sustained SBA service delivery in each country. Achievements towards the expected results for the current programme phase for each country have started to materialize at the time of this mid-term evaluation.

**Relevance:**

All national societies draw upon national data sets on hazard profiles in their respective countries. In addition, the national societies draw to a different degree upon local data on hazards, vulnerabilities and capacities, generated through school-based contingency planning processes and/or school VCAs. The evaluator concludes that the more local data are used to inform the activities of SBA in a school, the more tailor-made and therefore relevant the activities are for the respective local setting and beneficiaries.

All national societies report to harmonize their approach with the respective governmental authorities and governmental policies. In interviews with the evaluator, representatives of the educational authorities and ministries in **Lebanon, Egypt, and Morocco** confirmed, that the national societies develop and implement the SBAs in close coordination with the authorities and that the SBAs are aligned to respective national policies and serve to implement or complement national strategies.

In **Palestine**, the coordination with the authorities has started and PRCS claimed to develop the pilot SBA in alignment with the authorities' policies.

In **Lebanon, Egypt, and Morocco**, the relevance of the SBA within the respective national societies' overall programming has grown, although to a varying extent.

**Sustainability & Connectedness:**

In all four countries, the national societies cannot implement and sustain SBA on their own, but institutions such as schools and their line authorities, as well as governmental DRM institutions like civil protection within their respective mandates need to contribute their capacities. To become functional and sustainable, the SBA require committed contributions and cooperation of at least these governmental partners. For **Palestine**, it is too early to assess progress.

The national societies in **Lebanon, Egypt and Morocco** are aware of their roles as pioneers of a SBA model in their country, but they are also aware, that the implementation requires the upper mentioned cooperation with and contributions of the other actors.

Therefore the national societies develop and implement the SBA conceptually in a holistic way. The SBA concepts define the roles and contributions of the national societies in light of their own mandates, but at the same time also define the roles and necessary contributions of the other actors. The evaluator concludes that connectedness is a conceptual core element of the SBA. Consequently the national societies seek connectedness at all times in the implementation of the SBAs to ensure, that necessary other stakeholders (schools, line ministries, DRM actors) activate and provide own capacities to generate full benefits of the SBAs.

**Lebanon, Egypt and Morocco** national societies report that they are currently acknowledged as conceptual leaders and key drivers for SBA in their respective countries. At the same time, they are aware, that sustainability of the full potentials of SBA will only become possible, when the governments themselves take full ownership and responsibility for large scale implementation of SBA and building and maintaining necessary capacities and framework conditions.

In their role as **current key drivers**, advocacy towards the government to take up ownership and responsibility is a current prime aspect of the roles of the national societies and a key instrument to contribute towards sustainability.

The building of ownership and responsibility among the governments reportedly takes a long time. Neither the three national societies nor their governmental counterparts expect that the governments will take leadership and allocate own resources to an extent any time soon, that will release the national societies from their roles as key drivers and the necessity to bring in significant own funds for scaling up and sustaining the achievements. Therefore, the process of building and establishing sustainable structures for SBA implementation is geared towards sustainability, but will require the HNSs to remain advocates and key drivers for the time being. Hence fundraising to remain able to fulfil



the lead role and advocacy to convince all stakeholders involved to take more own responsibility are key during this stage of the process.

#### **Coherence:**

As mentioned, the SBAs are conceptually geared towards combining stakeholders' capacities in a complementary way towards collective outcomes. The national societies define their own capacities and contributions in SBA aligned to their respective mandates as well as to the mandates and capacities of their counterparts such as schools, education authorities and DRM authorities. The evaluator concludes that the approaches are thereby coherent. No indications for any contradictions on policy level were found. The evaluator did not come across any indications for unintended political consequences triggered by the HNSs activities.

#### **Impact:**

While it is too early to assess impacts for **Palestine**, progress in the other three countries **Lebanon**, **Egypt** and **Morocco** already materialized in impacts on micro, meso and macro levels.

On the **micro level**, the schools visited by the evaluator report to have benefited in several aspects from the SBA activities. But none of the national societies is currently positioned to systematically measure wider impacts towards resilience among the beneficiaries with their current monitoring approaches. Hence the HNS are not yet able to systematically prove impacts and benefits through solid data sets. To introduce impact measurement would enable them to sustain own fundraising and advocacy efforts with solid data sets.

On the **meso level**, the national societies could advance their own institutional capacities in terms of quality and quantity and therefore positioned themselves to roll out SBA on a larger scale. The HNS managed to raise awareness among governmental institutions for the importance and benefits of institutionalizing SBA in the country. Thereby they gained their status as key drivers in their countries and partly directly involved in building capacities among governmental stakeholders. While always being involved in building capacities on school level, they in some cases are directly building capacities of educational authorities or governmental DRM structures such as civil defence.

On the **macro level**, first improvements of the framework conditions and governmental policies have materialized, to which advocacy efforts of the HNS have contributed significantly.

The structures of the national societies have been influenced by the intervention in a way that the growing SBA approaches led to increased horizontal and vertical capacities for SBA in the national societies of **Lebanon**, **Egypt** and **Morocco**. But all national societies claim that their current lead role in SBA in their country currently serves to promote and establish the approach in their country, while their future role as one actor among others in an established sustainable national SBA system composed of different actors and capacities remains to be defined and will depend on future developments.

**All four HNS** assess the opportunities for exchange, provided by the BMZ MENA programme, as beneficial for their own SBA development and share a common interest to continue the exchange in future. Mutual exposure, joint thematic reflection and discussion of the approaches reportedly contribute positively to their own SBA development.

The initial idea of the current programme phase to develop a regional SBA approach was waived during the phase. The evaluator supports the step, as the evaluation has shown, that each SBA needs to be developed upon and tailor made to the distinct national contexts. In each country, the mandates of the national society, their sectoral capacities, but also the mandates and capacities of the



governmental counterparts differ. Hence national contexts are unique and require unique targeted solutions and approaches. Hence exchange among the HNS does not lead to copy-paste solutions, but adaptation and alignment to national contexts remains key. But the similarities of HNS mandates and capacities and their national contexts are clearly visible. Therefore evaluator concludes that the regional character of the programme, that provides opportunities for exchange and mutual learning, generates additional value and benefit for each HNS related their own SBA development.

Major recommendations

<b>Major recommendations</b>
<p><b>Monitor impacts through appropriate monitoring instruments such as KAP studies:</b> The introduction of systematic impact measurement will enable HNS to prove impacts and benefits through solid data sets. Such data will add evidence to own fundraising and advocacy efforts.</p>
<p><b>Diversify funding:</b> Positive changes towards institutionalization on meso level and improved framework conditions on macro level become visible in Egypt, Morocco and Lebanon. The improved framework conditions entail high expectations among governmental stakeholders to further scale up SBA in these countries. Scaling up will require further external resources and support to take further steps towards institutionalization (in HNS and external). It is time to take chances of the growing interest of governments and potential external donors and to try to diversify funding with which the national programmes can be put on more substantial and diversified grounds for the coming years. Potential sources are own governments, international donors, the private sectors or funds generated by the HNS themselves through provision of paid services.</p>
<p><b>Foster advocacy efforts:</b> Advocacy is the core element to keep all necessary actors interested and collaboration high and therefore is key to advance towards sustainable outcomes on all levels. Towards changes of policies and frameworks on macro level, towards institutionalization (within the HNS and externally) on meso level, and towards raised awareness and thereby ownership on micro level. The evaluator recommends to develop further advocacy and communication tools that, informed by solid monitoring data, show the benefits of the approaches.</p>