

World Tsunami Awareness Day 2017 Event - Provisional Note

Protecting Lives! Ensuring Sustainability

November 30- December 2, 2017 (Marsa Alam, Egypt)

Tsunamis are rare, powerful and unpredictable natural hazards, with devastating consequences for coastal populations caught in their path. The vast majority is caused by earthquakes in active seismic areas and occurs along a limited range of inhabited shores around the world. (CRED – UNISDR, 2016) According to EM-DAT records, 16 major tsunamis killed 250,900 people in 21 countries between 1996 and 2015, most of which occurred during the Indian Ocean tsunami of December 2004 which caused an estimated 227,000 fatalities in 14 countries, with Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India and Thailand hardest-hit.

Rapid urbanization and growing tourism in tsunami-prone regions are putting ever-more people in harm's way making the reduction of risk a key factor if the world is to achieve substantial reductions in disaster losses. Climate change adds to the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, including tsunamis. With warming temperatures, melting ice masses and rising sea levels, the resilience and capacity for inclusive sustainable development of coastal cities is deeply threatened. This necessitates a better understanding of those events, their causes and their effects in turn, in order to reduce risk by increasing resilience, mitigating, and adapting to the impacts of climate change.

In December 2015, the United Nations General Assembly designated 5 November as World Tsunami Awareness Day to promote a global culture of tsunami awareness. The date for the annual celebration was chosen in honor of the Japanese “Inamura-no-hi”, meaning the “burning of the rice sheaves”. During an 1854 earthquake a farmer saw the tide receding, a sign of a looming tsunami and set fire to his entire harvest to warn villagers, who fled to high ground. Afterwards, he built an embankment and planted trees as a buffer against future waves.

The World Tsunami Awareness Day aims to **raise awareness of tsunami risks** and share innovative approaches to reduce their impacts. The day will align its aim with the International Day for Disaster Reduction (IDDR 2017) and the "Sendai Seven Campaign" which will focus this year on **Target B** of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction which aims at reducing the **number of affected people** globally by disasters. Furthermore, the day will highlight interlinkages between **disaster risk reduction, climate change and the sustainable development goals**.

The Arab Youth for Resilience Campaign 2017-2020 was recently launched by UNISDR – Regional Office for Arab States in consultation with partner organizations and regional experts to strengthen the role of youth in implementing Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk reduction (2015-2030), the SDGs, and the Paris Climate Agreement. The campaign aims to build Arab youth capacities in disaster risk reduction, mobilize and institutionalize youth participation for enhancing community resilience, as well as develop youth policy positions at the local, national, and regional levels.

#TsunamiDay2017 #Switch2Sendai

Event Overview:

Activity 1 <i>Sessions, Lectures & Working Groups</i>		
		
Tsunami Risks & Impacts	Disaster Resilience: MCR! Campaign	Biodiversity & Marine Ecosystems
Cross-Cutting Theme:	<i>Linkages with Climate-Change for all 3 topics</i>	
Activity 2		Activity 3
Emergency First Response (EFR)  EMERGENCY® first response		Discover Scuba Diving

Activity 1:

Participants will be expected to work in groups to produce and present ideas or projects that touch on any of the following: tsunamis, climate change, disaster resilience in urban and/or coastal settings, as well as marine ecosystems and biodiversity.

A) *Tsunami risks, and regional impacts:*

In the Arab Region, the 2003 Boumerdes earthquake and tsunami hit Algeria leaving in its wake more than 2200 dead, 10,000 injured and around 200,000 displaced.(IFRC, 2015)

The effects of climate change strain on old earthquake faults which can lead to further seismic activity increasing predisposition for tsunamis. In addition, around 130 million people live on Mediterranean coastlines where about 10% of the tsunamis worldwide occur, with seismic activity affecting Mediterranean Sea posing a potential risk. (European Geosciences Union, 2015)The risk is further compounded by the fact the Mediterranean is relatively small and enclosed, meaning any tsunami could spread throughout the much of the basin. Warning times, essential for minimizing human losses, would be short. Economic impacts could be significant, with the Mediterranean home to some large industrial centers and ports.

B) *The Ten Essentials for ‘Making Cities Resilient’*

Highly acclaimed since its launch in May 2010, UNISDR’s ‘Making Cities Resilient: My City is Getting Ready!’ is a global campaign which seeks to achieve resilient and sustainable urban

communities at the local level. The campaign and its 10 Essentials checklist offer a set of tools which support the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015 – 2030, as well as the Sustainable Development Goals, and the Paris Climate Agreement. Essentials 1-3 cover governance and financial capacity; Essentials 4-8 cover the many dimensions of planning and disaster preparation; and Essentials 9-10 cover the disaster response and post-event recovery.

C) Biodiversity & Marine Ecosystems:

Climate change and projected temperature increase throughout the 21st century are likely to have an effect on biological processes and ocean biodiversity. A rise in temperature is resulting in the acceleration of biodegradation and dispersal of global organic pollutants (for example, petroleum and chlorinated hydrocarbons). Furthermore, Climatic factors are influencing the numbers and distribution of fish species given changes in factors such as water temperature, salinity, nutrients, sea level, and amount of sea ice—all of which are likely to be affected by man-made climate change. (IPCC AR5, 2014)

Linkages with the SDGs & Climate Change

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) call for concerted efforts towards building an inclusive, sustainable and resilient future for the people and the planet. This includes SDGs 11, 13, and 14 which are directly related to the topics in this activity. SDG 11 is concerned with making cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. SDG 13 calls for governments to take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts. SDG 14 aims to mobilize action to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development. The successful implementation of these goals, along with the Paris Climate Agreement, will greatly depend on the engagement of cities and urban communities, particularly in coastal regions in the face of adverse climate affected weather events.

Activity 2:

Emergency First Response (EFR)

Emergency First Response training focuses on building confidence in lay rescuers* and increasing their willingness to respond when faced with an emergency. Participants will learn simple steps to follow for emergency care and practice applying skills in a non-stressful learning environment. In addition, self-study manuals, videos and quick reference cards will be allocated to all participants in efforts to enhance learning afterwards. An introductory EFR course will be delivered to participants during the World Tsunami Day Awareness training event.

Activity 3:

Discover Scuba Diving

This training will provide the participants with hands-on experience in exploring key issues facing the achievement of SDG 14, *Life below water*, including marine health, and marine biodiversity. While not a scuba certification course, Discover Scuba Diving is a quick and easy introduction to what it takes to explore the underwater world, and the Red Sea marine life, and the effects of climate change on the eco-system. You will learn the basic safety guidelines and skills

needed to dive under the supervision of a PADI professional. Diving instructors will provide all the basic scuba gear you'll use including a mask, snorkel, fins, regulator, buoyancy control device, dive gauges and a tank.

Overall Objectives:

The training aims to:

- Increase global knowledge of tsunami risks
- Understand disaster resilience in urban and/or coastal settings
- Explore innovative and effective measures in reducing tsunami impacts
- Train on Emergency first response ensuring confidence when faced with an emergency.
- Establish youth partnerships for cooperation in disaster risk reduction

Training Summary:

The training will be a 3-day event that will take place in Marsa Alam, Egypt and will include lectures, workshops, and hands-on experience with the maritime ecosystem. The training will provide knowledge and new perspectives on tsunamis and their linkage to sustainable development, resilience building, biodiversity, and marine life as well as their interdependence and linkages with climate change. This will be done through three specific activities:

- Recognizing World Tsunami Awareness Day through promoting a culture of tsunami awareness and resilience building. This will include different sessions and lectures as well as working groups
- Emergency first response training focusing on building confidence in lay rescuers and increasing their willingness to respond when faced with an emergency
- Under the direct supervision of a PADI professional Instructor, learn the basic safety guidelines and skills needed to dive under water.

Target Participants:

- Youth engaged in fields related to biodiversity, climate change, disaster risk reduction, maritime sciences, urban development in coastal cities, and sea and/or coastal protection.